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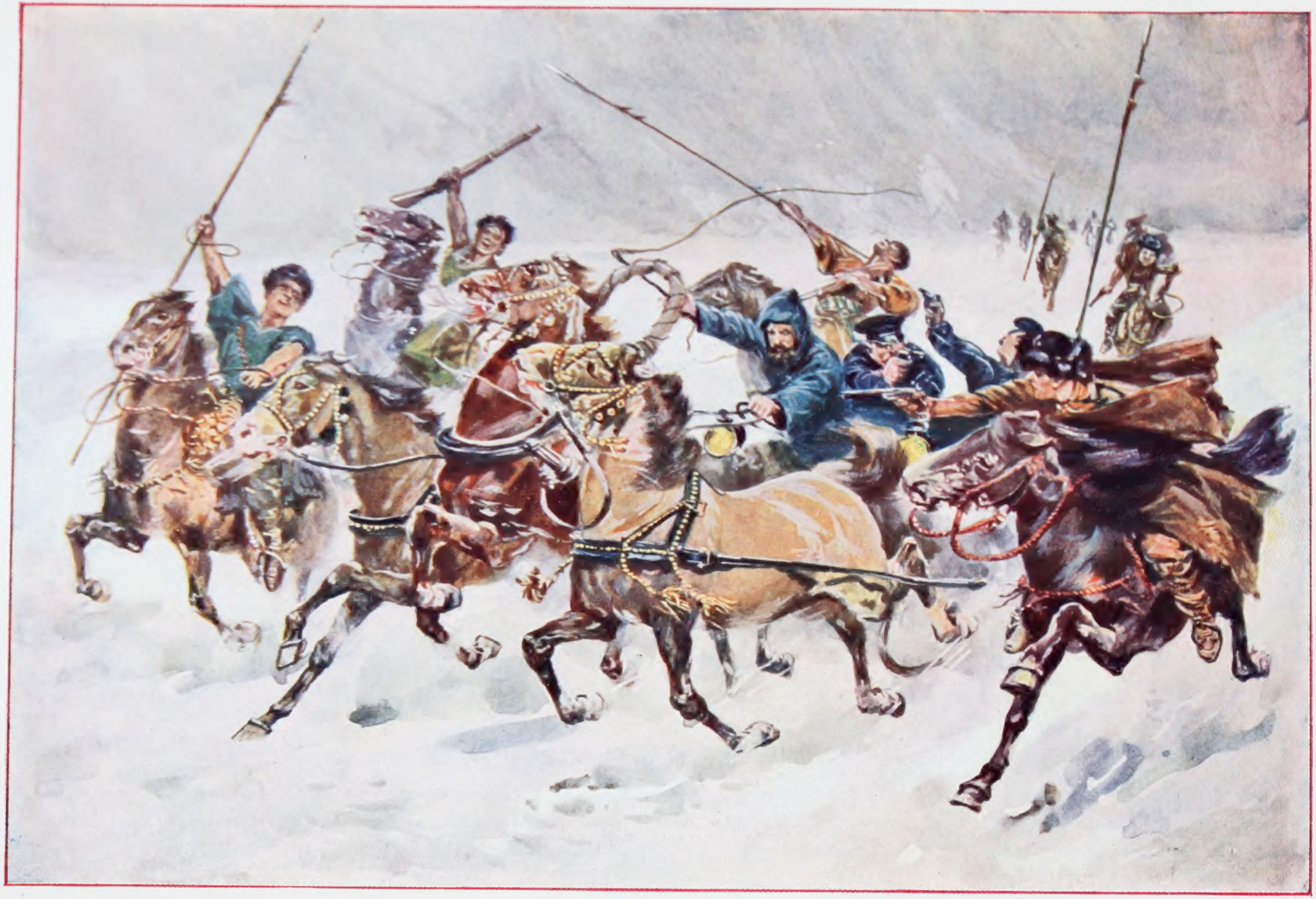
CASSELL'S HISTORY OF

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR



MANCHURIAN BANDITS ATTACKING RUSSIAN OFFICIALS.

CASSELL'S
HISTORY OF THE
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

ILLUSTRATED

SPECIAL EDITION
VOLUME I.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT AND THE DANGERS AHEAD.

By ARTHUR DIÓSY, F.R.G.S.

"WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?" says many a puzzled inquirer, unable to see why Japan and Russia should not be able to live as good neighbours in Eastern Asia. The answer he generally receives is that the immediate cause of war is the struggle for preponderance in Korea, Japan requiring for her own safety and independence that no Power but herself shall exercise paramount influence in that distressful, ill-governed, but naturally rich country. A glance at the map will show how nearly Korea concerns Japan. A hostile Power established in that peninsula would be within a few hours' steaming of the Japanese coast. Moreover, Korea is, to a great extent, the granary of Japan; it is a natural receptacle for the overflow of her constantly-increasing population, and an excellent market for her wares. Owing to centuries of seclusion and of wretchedly corrupt, inept government, the natural wealth of Korea lies for the most part fallow. It is evidently Japan's mission to develop these neglected resources and she has already set about the task with her usual energy, devoting herself chiefly, so far, to railway construction, but also making her influence felt in every branch of trade, of industry, and of finance. Japan has thus created for herself in the Korean Empire interests so considerable that they would alone entitle her to a predominant position in that peninsula, even if its geographical situation did not make it so vitally important—as a Japanese statesman described it, "An arrow pointing at Japan's heart."

It is just this geographical fact that constitutes the great strategical importance of Korea for Russia also; for Japan, established in a fortified position on the southern coast could close the narrow seas against the passage of ships proceeding between Russia's older possessions on the Pacific and her newly acquired territories—"leased," or merely "temporarily occupied," but still in her grip—

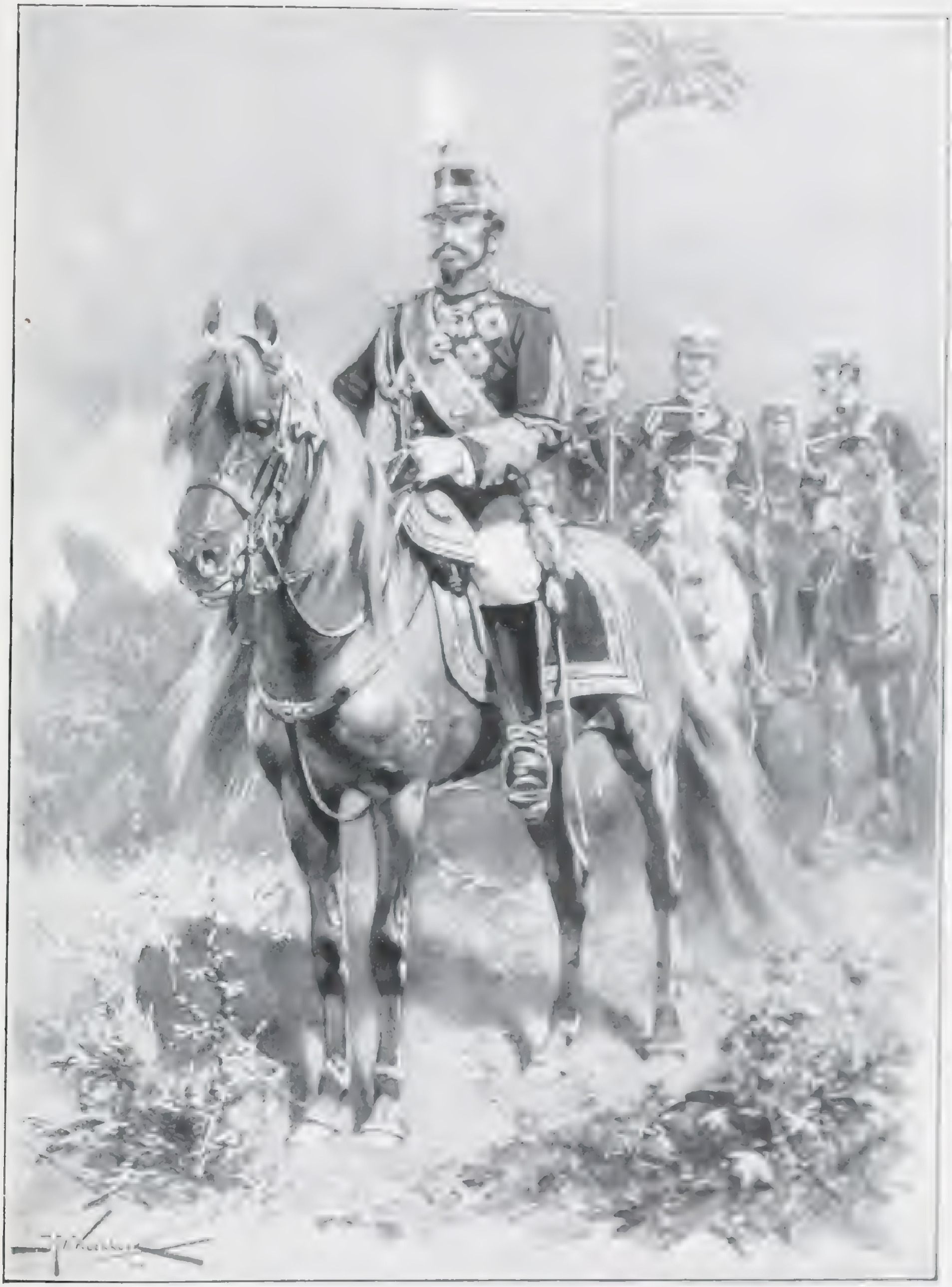
on the northern gulfs of the China Seas. This danger to her communications by sea appears intolerable to Russia, but Japan could afford to ignore her objections, meeting them with the obvious rejoinder that Russia's presence in Manchuria being, by her own showing, purely temporary, it cannot be of very serious importance to her that the sea-road between that region and her own legitimate possessions should, in the future, be dominated by Japan. Nevertheless, Japan was willing, as an evidence of her sincere desire for a peaceful understanding with Russia, to undertake not to erect any fortifications on the southern coast of Korea.

Korea is, however, not the only bone of contention. Were it so, some arrangement might have been made possible—something short of partition, at one time proposed by Russia, or of her other proposal that a broad strip of the northern part of the country should be "neutralised," of course with a right of way for Russia across it; for Japan could not admit either of these schemes: the first would have done away with that "independence and territorial integrity" (however nominal) of Korea to which Japan and Britain stand pledged by their alliance; the other appeared undesirable to a nation like the Japanese, who have carefully noted Russia's tendency to spread like a spot of oil from any place on the map where she has once obtained a footing.

If the Korean question might possibly have been laid at rest, at all events for some years to come, this was not the case with the position of Russia in Manchuria. The mere fact of her presence, in great force, in that nominally Chinese territory, bitterly galling to Japan at any time, had of late been rendered little short of scandalous by the cynical way in which the Tsar's representatives lightly treated the gross breach of faith they had caused their august Master to commit by not keeping the solemn promise to evacuate by a fixed date. This disregard of national pledges was, indeed, an affront to other Powers besides Japan; to America it was a direct and open snub, as the most positive assurances of evacuation had been given to her, and were claimed, too soon, as a triumph for her diplomacy!

America and Britain have repeatedly intimated that the policy of the Open Door—that is, of equal rights and advantages for all nations trading with the Chinese Empire—was their chief concern in the Far East, and so far Russia has not actually slammed the Door in their faces. Some shrewd observers maintain that the Door is really only ajar, and that they have noticed signs of its moving slowly and noiselessly, towards closing, but *officially* the Door is still open in Manchuria. Japan, however, claimed from Russia a formal treaty engagement for the fulfilment of her oft-repeated pledges that she would loosen her iron grip on what is still, in the eye of the law of nations, Chinese territory. Japan was willing that Russia should continue to enjoy the advantages in Manchuria she had bullied or cajoled China into granting, but she insisted on the recognition, in treaty form, of China's sovereign rights over that territory. For Japan knows full well the real meaning of Russia's continued presence in that region. She knows what Russia wants. What is it?

Russia's object, steadfastly, unswervingly pursued, with marvellous patience and boldness and skill, is of such a



HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY,
THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN

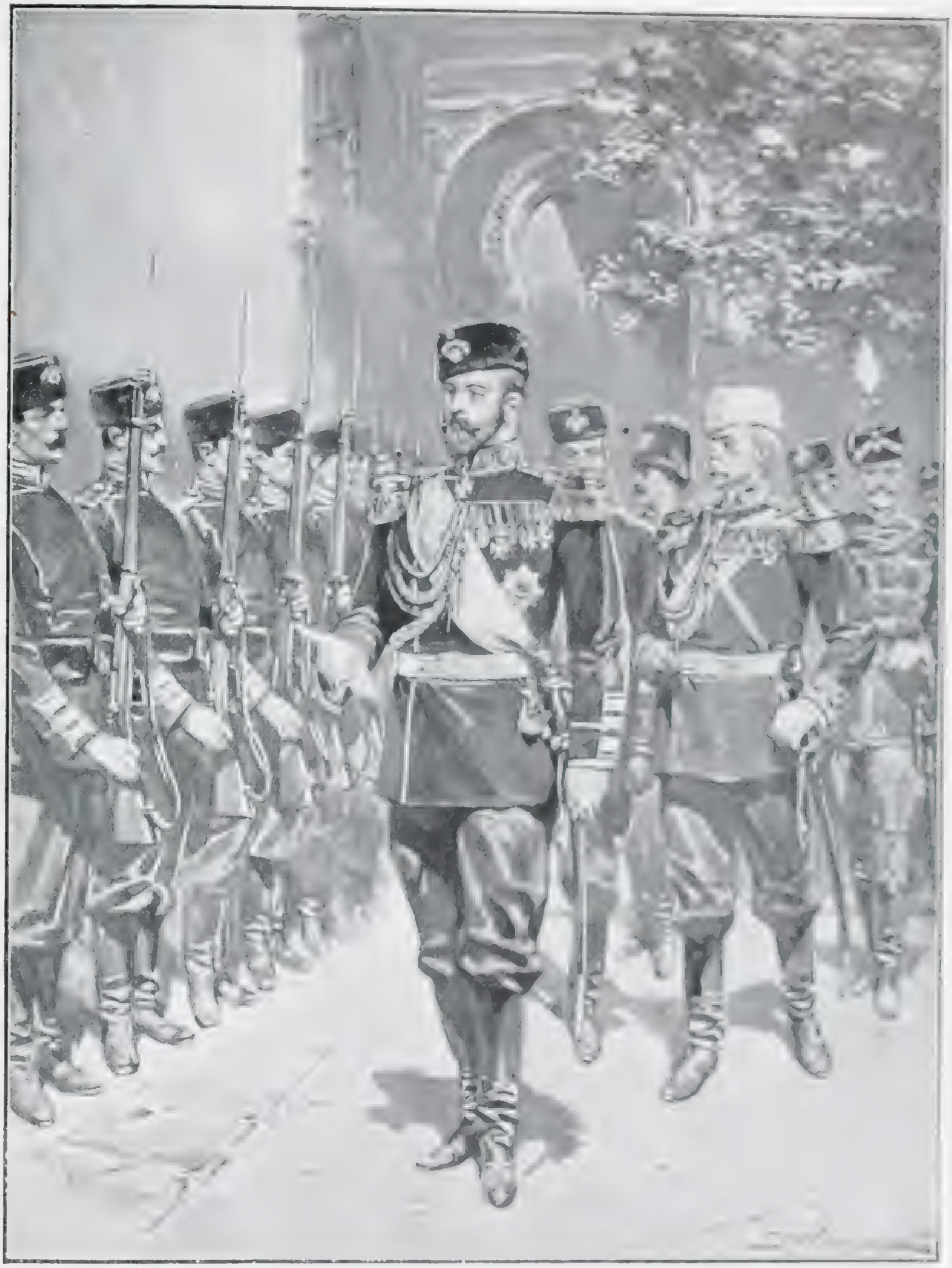
stupendous magnitude that even her most determined opponents admit its grandeur, and must respect those who have, for generations, striven towards its fulfilment.

Russian aims:

It is nothing less than supremacy in Asia, to be obtained by means of the establishment of such naval and military predominance, at first in the northern half of the continent, as would place the untold resources of the huge Chinese Empire, and its teeming population, at the disposal, in course of time, of the Northern Conqueror (already Lord of the enormous tracts of Siberia, some day to rival Canada in productiveness), and thus make him Arbiter of the destinies of the peoples of Asia, and Ruler of the Pacific. A vast conception, truly, but one that seems to the minds of millions of Russians, even after the heavy blow their naval prestige has just received, simply a forecast of what will surely happen, all in good time. Nor are all the subjects of the Tsar particularly elated at the prospect. Many of them appreciate the tremendous difficulties in the way of its accomplishment, and deplore the terrible expenditure of blood and treasure it has entailed and will continue to entail. But the Russian is, by nature, a fatalist, and he looks upon this unceasing onward march of his nation to the conquest of vast new dominions as inevitable. "It is the destiny of Holy Russia!" So think nine out of ten of those Russians who think at all. It is this fatalism that imbues the eastward march of the Russian millions with such grave importance for other nations. The Russians see in their "grand destiny" the manifest expression of God's will, for it is their firm conviction, as a nation, that the Almighty has singled them out from all the peoples to be the saviours of the world. They believe that, in the fulness of time, all the other nations—and especially those that now rejoice in the possession of what they term freedom—will turn to Russia in their extremity, and, worn out by anarchy, tired and weakened by what many Russians call "the debauch of liberty," will ask to be taken under the benign sway of the autocratic Tsar, "the Father of his People," and will seek rest and salvation in the bosom of the Russian Orthodox Church. And this is not the belief only of fanatical peasants, of mystic priests, or of dreamy professors; it is the faith, deeply-rooted and ever active, of the men who are now ruling the Russian Empire. It comes as a shock when such convictions are suddenly revealed by one of those bland, highly-polished, deeply-learned men, and the shock is intensified when one notes the inspired tones in which they are spoken, the fanatical flashing of the otherwise mild eyes, the whole transfiguration of the man. It was in moments of such exaltation that the Russians formed the plans that re-arranged the map of Asia; it is this spirit, this fervour, in which religious zeal and patriotism become one feeling, that make the soldiers of the Tsar dangerous opponents for the Japanese to meet.

Strong as this national and religious impulse is with the Russians, a spirit still stronger, because more actively enthusiastic, burns in Japanese hearts. It is as fine an emotion as any race has ever felt, a spirit that makes heroes of a whole nation when the need arises: *Yamato Damashi-i*, the Spirit of Old Japan.

The astonished world has just seen a clear manifestation of what that



THE EMPEROR
[illegible]

indomitable spirit can accomplish. The great drama on which the curtain has now risen will reveal many more instances of its operation.

The die is now cast, and the nations stand, with bated breath, in presence of the beginning of a gigantic conflict, the end of which no man can foresee.

It is, indeed, a moot point whether the struggle now commencing, however vast its proportions, may not ultimately prove to have been but the opening scene of the War of the Nations—merely, the preliminary skirmish of the Battle of Armageddon. Earnest efforts are, undoubtedly, being made by all the great civilised Powers, and especially by the United States, to restrict to the original opponents, Japan and Russia, the conflict the neutral nations have not been able to prevent; but there is no certainty that they will be successful. Rather is it to be feared that the conflagration now kindled in the Far East may spread like burning oil, and involve nation after nation in its devastating flames.

This terrible contingency may occur, whatever the immediate result of the hostilities between the forces of the two Empires who have just drawn swords. In the event of Russia's numbers bearing down, at the end of a protracted struggle, the resistance of Japan's gallant warriors, Britain could not allow Japan, her friend and ally, to be so crippled by the victor as to debar her, for many years to come, from her legitimate position as a Great Power in Eastern Asia and on the Northern Pacific Ocean. It is hardly to be expected that the Muscovite, flushed by ultimate victory, would restrain his hand in response to any representations, however weighty, from Britain. The serious threat of force could alone influence him, and that only were he to find himself, at the close of a long and exhausting war, isolated in presence of stern and resolute Britain. Such isolation might, indeed, be the case were it not for the strong probability that France would have to support Russia were she confronted by two opponents (in that case Japan and Britain), just as, by the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, we are bound to assist Japan by force of arms should she have to encounter more than one hostile Power at a time.

The danger of Britain's being drawn into the whirlpool is almost as great in the contrary event. France, in spite of her recent entrance into closer and more friendly relations with Britain, would hardly be likely to continue to stand idly by whilst the "friendly and allied nation," her much-petted comrade, Russia, was being humiliated by the victory of an adversary so very much smaller, and that foe an Asiatic nation. Russia's ultimate defeat by Japan would mean the crumbling into dust of her prestige, the total loss of her masterful grip on Manchuria, the vanishing into thin air of her intended predominance in China and Korea, the hopelessness of her dream of mastery on the Pacific, the shattering of her aspirations to the suzerainty of all Asia. The wreck of her Asiatic power would inevitably entail her deposition from her proud eminence in Europe, where the nations would no longer stand in awe of the colossus when the Japanese sword had completely shattered its feet of clay. The Government of the French Republic, as at present constituted, would be loth to plunge France into war, especially as it would entail a conflict with Britain, to save Russia from such downfall; but behind that Government stands the French people, still, to a

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great extent, enamoured with Russia—the thrifty French people, who have, out of their hard-earned savings, financed their Muscovite ally, both his State Treasury and his industries and railways, to the enormous amount of *four hundred and forty million pounds sterling!* Out of this sum, advanced by their French friends, the Russians have defrayed the cost of their great railway across Asia and of its branch line to the shores of the China Sea, and of that 'arge fleet they have so rapidly built, "almost secretly" (as Captain Ottley, R.N., formerly British Naval Attaché at St. Petersburg, said in a recent speech). Well may the French people feel intensely concerned in the fortunes of their huge debtor!

RUSSIA'S SOUTHERNMOST CAMP IN THE FAR EAST [illegible]
HALF-WAY BETWEEN THE FRONTIER [illegible]

There lies the awful danger lurking in the dim future of the Russo-Japanese conflict: the possibility of Britain and France being driven to abandon their original positions as passive seconds in the great duel and to draw swords against each other on behalf, nominally, of the principals, but in reality in defence of their own interests. Such a prospect is, indeed, terrible to contemplate. It might be rendered more remote could either party hope for the accession to its side of a third partner so powerful as to weigh down the scale in its favour to an extent that would render a conflict almost too hazardous for the opponents to undertake. Such might be the case were the United States of America to declare themselves openly, by word and deed—for mere words have lost their efficacy in the world's affairs when the guns have once spoken—on the side towards which their sympathies undoubtedly incline and on which, did the majority of Americans but know it, their real interests lie. But the very fact that America refrained from the determined action that would, if taken in concert with Britain, have prevented this terrible war from breaking out, inspires but faint hope of her realising, at the present juncture, her new responsibilities as a Great Power on the Pacific. She has, it is true, taken the lead in striving to obtain an international agreement for the preservation of the neutrality of China and the integrity of her territory, and such an effort is deserving of appreciation; but the experience of the notorious "Concert of the Powers" during the repression of the anti-foreign outbreak in China, in 1900, induces scepticism as to the value of international "agreements" relating to the Far East.

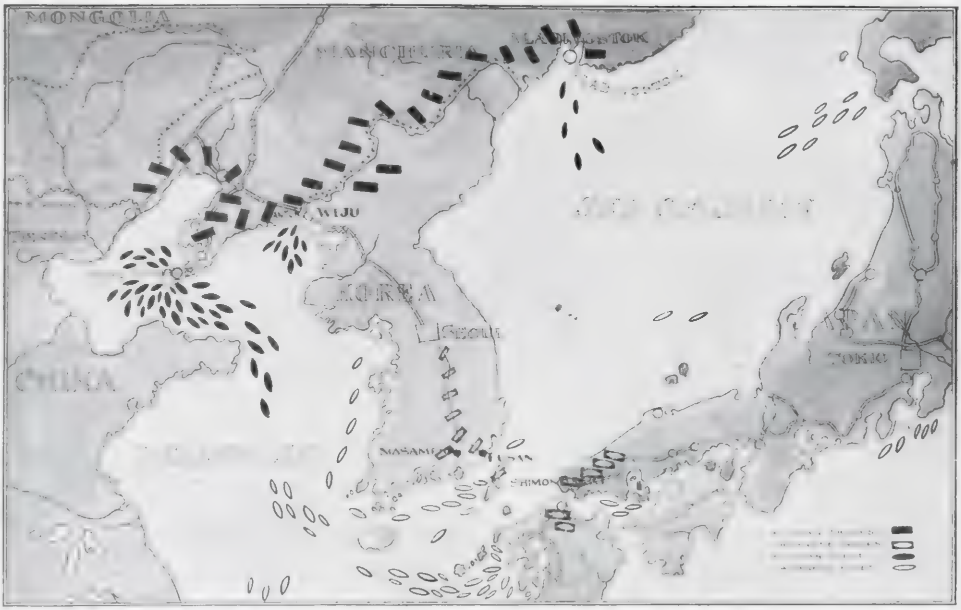
There is another great World-Power whose influence, thrown into either scale, might entirely change the issue of the conflict; but the repeated declarations of German policy with regard to the Far East have loudly emphasised the Kaiser's resolve not to be drawn into the quarrel. Germany is not sorry to see two Great Powers (especially since one of them is a powerful neighbour) exhausting their fighting strength against each other; the shrewd Teuton hopes to do a good deal of business with both belligerents, and —who knows?—some unconsidered but valuable trifle may, somehow, fall to his share in the end. Officially, Germany favours Russia, a good understanding with that Power having always been a cardinal point in German policy; but the majority of the German people sympathise in their hearts with Japan, only they dare not express their feeling openly for fear of giving pleasure to the British! Germany is, however, still a "dark horse" in Far Eastern politics, and with a ruler like the Kaiser it is not safe to forecast any line of conduct as likely to be pursued by her.

There is another "dark horse" in the Far East—China. What part China may ultimately take in the conflict remains an unknown quantity; but it seems likely that her present rulers will continue to "sit on the fence" until some decisive victory may indicate which way the tiger-cat of war is jumping. Should Japan appear to be victorious, on land as well as at sea, there is but little doubt that China would turn and rend the Russians, at whose hands she has suffered much that was particularly galling to her stiff-necked pride. Whether the Chinese Imperial Government—that is, the Empress-Dowager and her advisers—side openly with one or other of the belligerents, or whether China remain officially neutral, there is a strong probability that considerable numbers of Chinese—especially young men of the Reform Party, the only ones in whom anything akin to the patriotic spirit, as understood in other countries, can be said to exist—will join, or, at least, aid, the forces of their former enemies and just and lenient conquerors in their fight against Russia.

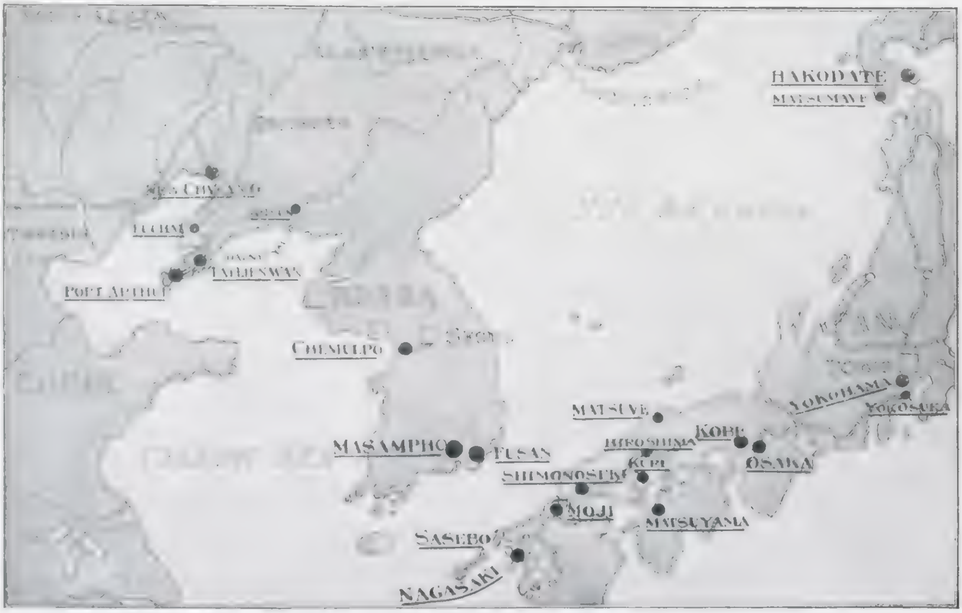
Besides these purely Chinese volunteers, the roving horsemen of Manchuria, arrant robbers many of them, plying their trade in well-armed bands, are sure to seize the welcome opportunity of harassing the Russians. These half-wild horsemen would, with a little training under Japanese officers, usefully supplement the Japanese cavalry, numerically far too weak in proportion to the other arms. Important as the assistance would be that these Manchurian bands, and the Irregular Horse that could easily be raised amongst the great hordes of Mongol Tartars, could bring to the side of Japan, there is one aspect of the matter that renders their employment undesirable from the humanitarian point of view. It applies equally to participation in the conflict by Chinese. The fate of any Russians who might happen to fall, wounded or unwounded, into the hands of Chinese, Manchurians, or Mongols, is too terrible to contemplate. The long-pent-up revenge for the atrocities committed by the Tsar's troops in suppressing the so-called "Boxer" outbreak would be wreaked upon them with all the fiendish ingenuity of Chinese cruelty, and this in spite of the strenuous efforts of the Japanese officers who might be attached to these irregular troops, to make them conform to the usages of warfare between civilised nations. Such efforts would be looked upon by Chinese, Manchu, and Mongol as mere sentimental weakness; they would probably fail to check the barbaric ferocity of the Irregulars, and Russia and her friends would hasten to cast the opprobrium for their crimes on Japan. The Japanese Government are fully alive to this danger, and will certainly discourage the embarrassing offers of aid they may receive.

THE HIGHWAY TO THE FAR EAST: VIEW ON THE MANCHURIAN RAILWAY.

The whole question of the effect the Russo-Japanese conflict may produce on China is so vast, so fraught with tremendous possibilities affecting the whole world, that imagination boggles at it. One may best estimate its supreme importance when one considers that the ultimate triumph of Russia would leave China, with her teeming millions, at her mercy; whereas the victory of Japan would drive the Chinese into the arms of the conquerors. Signs are not wanting that China, and especially the best and most promising element in her vast population, is already turning for guidance to Japan. Well may we hold our breath when we think of what it would mean for the four hundred millions of Chinese to allow their extraordinary vitality, their undoubted intelligence, their unrivalled industry and thrift, to be guided by their Japanese cousins into new channels; their sterling qualities applied, under that enlightened tuition, to the development—under good, honest government and with the help of all the resources of Western science—of the wonderful natural resources of the Celestial Empire. Under


MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA
VLADIVOSTOK
WIJU
KOREA
SEOUL
CHINA
MASAMPHO
FUSAN
SHIMONOSEKI
TOKIO
JAPAN

APPROXIMATE POSITION OF FORCES WHEN NEGOTIATIONS CEASED.


HAKODATE
MATSUMAYE
NEW CHWANG
DALNY
TALIENWAN
PORT ARTHUR
KOREA
CHEMULPO
SEOUL
CHINA
MATSUYE
YOKOHAMA
YOKOSUKA
MASAMPHO
FUSAN
HIROSHIMA
KOBE
OSAKA
KURE
SHIMONOSEKI
MOJI
MATSUYAMA
SASEBO
NAGASAKI

VULNERABLE POINTS OF ASIATIC RUSSIA, KOREA, AND JAPAN.

Japanese leadership and instruction, even the unmilitary Chinese race would probably be able to produce land and sea forces strong enough to make their country secure from foreign aggression and competent to hold her own in international matters. The fighting strength of China's millions, thus added to the naval and military power of victorious Japan, might well exercise a potent influence in Europe, in America, and even in Australia. That prospect, however, fades into insignificance before the certainty of the tremendous competition the rest of the world would have to face in industries, in commerce, and the carrying trade by sea, were China to throw in her lot with Japan and to take her as her "guide, philosopher, and friend." Four hundred millions of workers, toiling unremittingly for infinitesimal wages, would constitute an army of labour before which the other nations, ever striving for more leisure and higher pay, might well quail! Portentous as the results of Japan's triumph might thus be, they would, in all probability, be far less dangerous to the interests of the rest of the world than an ultimate Russian victory. That event would make Russia, at no distant date, the arbiter of the destinies of Asia, and give her a preponderance in Europe that would be a standing menace to all free nations.

EMPEROR AND CROWN PRINCE OF KOREA.

It may serve to give a good idea of the far-reaching possibilities of the Russo-Japanese conflict if attention be drawn to another quarter in which it may easily bring forth momentous results. Russia's naval force in the Pacific has already, in the first twenty-four hours of the war, practically succumbed to the onslaught of the Japanese warships, and the Tsar may be under the necessity of replacing his lost vessels by others taken from his fleet in the Black Sea. In order to reach the Far East these ships must pass through the Turkish waters of the Bosphorus, and through the narrow gateway of the Dardanelles. The Sultan has the right, confirmed by international treaties, to close that passage to all foreign ships of war. Should he, yielding to Russian threats or cajolery, give free passage to the Tsar's ships, other Powers would not be slow to claim the same privilege, and Constantinople would lie at the mercy of any maritime nation cunning enough to lead up to its opportunity and bold enough to seize it at the right moment. Should the Sultan, as is more probable, take his firm stand on his treaty rights, Russia might attempt to force a passage for her ships. This would be an act of war against the Ottoman Empire that would rouse the Turks to fury. They have old scores to pay off against their hereditary foe, the Muscovite, and another Russo-Turkish war, with the attendant horrors sure to ensue from the Balkan States joining in the fray, would deluge South-Eastern Europe, and probably Asia Minor, with blood.

Enough has been said to prove the world-wide importance of the war now commencing. It stands to reason that it behoves every thinking man and woman, especially those of the English-speaking nations, to watch closely the progress of the conflict, as they will be able to do in the pages of this "History."

RUSSIAN SOLDIERS AT PORT ARTHUR.

Photo: Imperial Press Agency.

CHEMULPO, THE PORT OF SEOUL.

THE HISTORY

OF

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

PRELUDE.

THE FIRST SHOT.

ON February 8th, 1904, Chemulpo, the insignificant port of an insignificant capital, suddenly became, for a brief period, the most famous and interesting place in the whole world. For in its immediate vicinity was fired from a Russian gun-boat the first shot in the great conflict between the great Colossus of the North and the Island Nation of the Far East. Not till the following day did that shot have locally any serious sequel, and, in the meantime, another and much more lurid incident had emphasised the breaking-out of hostilities between the two Powers mentioned. But "first shots" in great international struggles have an interest all their own, and the day's doings at Chemulpo on that fateful Monday demand precedence on that account in any faithful narrative of the war.

In the afternoon several foreign warships were lying in the channel, some three miles from Chemulpo, which constitutes the anchorage of that minor port. The British Navy was represented by the fine cruiser *Talbot*, and at other moorings lay the American warship *Vicksburg*, the *Elba* and *Pascal* flying the Italian and French flags respectively, and the *Variag*, one of the newest and best of Russia's protected cruisers. During the afternoon another Russian warship, the *Koreetz*, had weighed anchor, and towards evening was to be seen leaving the harbour.

The shadow of coming events lay heavily on port and shipping in this apparently sequestered corner of the busy world. For it was known that diplomatic relations between Russia and Japan had come to an abrupt close, and that, to all intents and purposes, the nations were in a state of war. It is not proposed here to discuss in detail the negotiations which for nearly half a year had been proceeding with an almost exasperating tardiness, marked by half-calculated procrastination on the one side, on the other by elaborate patience. But it may be very briefly stated that on August 12th, 1903, the Japanese Government had proposed to the Russian Government a basis of agreement with reference to the mutual recognition of the interests of the two countries in Manchuria and Korea. In spite of earnest representations on the part of the Japanese Foreign Office, the Russian reply was delayed until December 11th, and, when received at Tokio, was held to be unsatisfactory. The Russian Government was, accordingly, asked to reconsider it. On January 6th, 1904, a further reply was forthcoming, which, again, was regarded as falling far short of Japan's requirements. On January 13th a renewed request was made by Japan that the Russian Government would reconsider certain of the questions raised. To this Japanese note no reply had been received in Tokio on February 5th, although the Russian Government had been frequently urged to expedite the matter. On February 6th it was understood in Europe that the reply had been

Photo. Symonds & Sons.

THE CREW OF THE *ASAMA*.

forwarded on February 4th to the Russian Viceroy of the Far East for transmission to Baron von Rosen, the Russian Minister at Tokio. Presumably it would in the ordinary course have been delivered on the 6th, but on the 5th Japan had formally intimated to the Russian Government that she would wait no longer, and that she had decided to cease further negotiations, to recall her Ministers from St. Petersburg, and to take steps to protect her interests at stake. As a consequence of this intimation orders were issued to the Russian Minister at Tokio to leave Japan forthwith, and on Sunday, February 7th, it was known to the civilised world that war might break out at any moment.

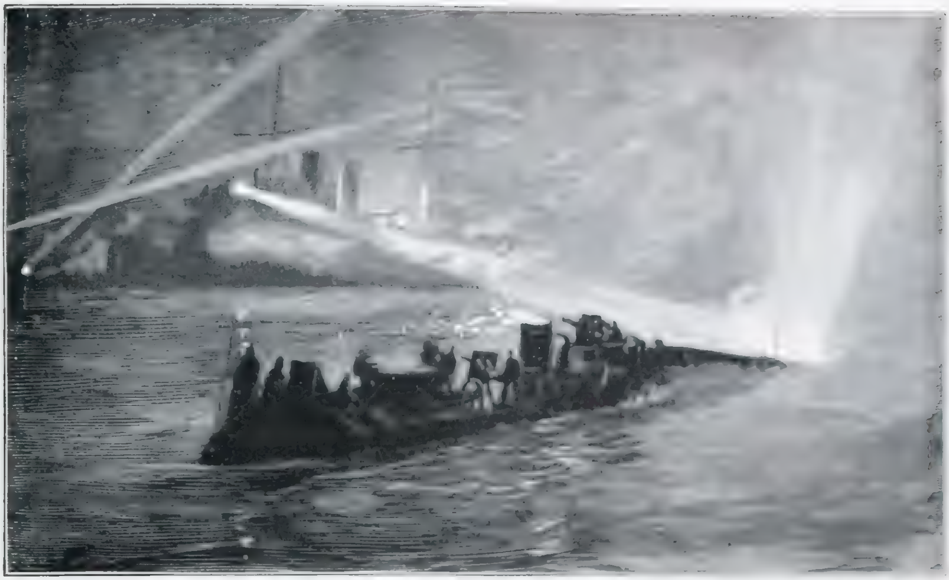
THE JAPANESE WARSHIP ASAMA.

Returning to Chemulpo, where we left the *Korietz* slowly steaming out to sea—an old 10-knot gunboat, she was incapable of any very speedy movement—it was about 5 o'clock in the afternoon when this luckless vessel took upon itself the responsibility of actually commencing the Russo-Japanese War. She was passing Round Island, which lies outside Chemulpho harbour, when a vision which, under other circumstances, would have been an inspiring one, was gradually revealed to the Russian commander, Captain Bielaev, and his crew. In rapid succession there came into view several transports, escorted by a cruiser division of the Japanese fleet, and some torpedo boats. Well might the Russians have felt misgivings as they "sized up" that workmanlike contingent. For, although of the six attendant cruisers five were vessels of about half the size of the *Korietz's* late consort in Chemulpo harbour, the sixth was the big armoured ship, *Asama*, which was half as large again as the *Varyag*, and with the appearance of which many Englishmen are familiar. Probably, too, Captain Bielaev was aware that the division was commanded by Rear-Admiral Uriu, an officer of very remarkable attainments, and one of the youngest of Japan's admirals. Now only forty-six years of age, Admiral Uriu received his early naval training in the United States; he was actively employed on the Staff during the Chino-Japanese War; and his name and reputation will, of course, have been familiar to the Russian Navy.

However, Captain Bielaev seems to have been in no way daunted by the imposing approach of the Japanese squadron, any one of the cruisers in which could have sunk him in a few minutes, and, as one of the Japanese torpedo-boats came within short range of him, one of his guns "spoke." Thus, in a moment of passionate foolhardiness, strangely typical of Russia's action in provoking the resentment of a Power temporarily and locally, at any rate, far stronger than herself, was fired the first shot of the war.

That shot, like so much of Russia's "bluff" against Japan, missed its mark. Nor was it immediately countered by effective Japanese reprisals. A couple of torpedoes were discharged at the *Korietz*, but did not hit her; and Captain Bielaev, finding discretion the better part of valour, ran back to rejoin the *Varyag* inside the harbour.

The Japanese ships continued their passage, and, in due course, four battalions of Japanese infantry, aggregating some three thousand men, were landed from the transports, an operation which would have been impossible in the eye of any but a very inferior enemy. Subsequently Chemulpo was occupied by a Japanese detachment, the remainder of the troops continuing the march to Seoul.



"THE SEARCHLIGHTS OF THE RUSSIAN WARSHIPS [illegible]

CHAPTER I.

FIRST BLOOD TO JAPAN!—THE ATTACKS AT PORT ARTHUR.

It is nearing midnight. In the roadstead outside the strongly fortified harbour of Port Arthur the bulk of the Russian fleet in the Far East lies at anchor. Inside the land-locked bay which forms the harbour there is ice, and, partly because of this, the Russian warships are moored in the outer anchorage. They are also, perhaps, contemplating an early movement in view of the tidings that a diplomatic rupture with Japan has taken place. Sombre shapes of steel, bristling with great guns, they lie in seeming absolute security, under the advanced works of one of the strongest fortresses in the world. Seven huge battleships are here—the *Petropavlosk* (the flagship of Vice-Admiral Stark), the *Poltava*, *Sevastopol*, *Peresviet*, *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, and *Tsarevitch*, with the cruisers *Novik*, *Bayan*, *Diana*, *Askold*, and *Boyarin*.

⌜This powerful fleet has presumed heavily on its inert strength. No special precautions have been taken against surprise beyond the sending out of a patrol of three torpedo-boats.⌟ All the destroyers and other light craft which might well have secured the squadron from insidious attack have been withdrawn into the harbour. On shore the harbour lights and beacons are burning as usual, and it is said that a circus in the town has enticed many men away from the forts, and possibly some of the officers from the ships. The sea is calm, the sky is clear, the moon is shining, and Russia and Japan are to all intents and purposes in a state of war. However little the

British Navy if ever, in such circumstances as these, a squadron of it is so careless of the danger which may leap on a sudden from out the tingling stillness of the night!

It is nearing midnight, and the great fleet and the frowning batteries beyond are hushed in sleep. Surely, despite all negligence, the real risk is small. What, save a fleet of immensely superior weight and power, whose approach would have been manifest to the torpedo-boat patrol, would venture on such a night to attack battleships grouped in front of such a backing of fortress artillery? As giving some idea of the inherent strength of a naval force like this, even at rest, let us take a single ship and note its qualities, both of resistance and offence. What a capacity to repel, as well as to deliver attack, is indicated in a monster like the *Tsarevitch* with its displacement of over 13,000 tons its four 12-inch and twelve 6 inch turret guns and powerful lighter armament, its gun-protection of from seven to eleven inches of specially hardened armour. Even without its engines of over 16 000 horse-power, giving a speed of eighteen knots, such a vessel is in itself a powerful floating fortress, a single discharge from the broadside guns of which means a hurtling mass of nearly three tons of steel, and from the armoured sides of which the projectiles of Nelson's day would have rebounded like peas. Yet there are foes which can strike swift and sudden terror even in such a strong citadel as this. A modern poet has, in language aptly fitted to their dread purpose and swift, stealthy oncoming, described those foes under the title which Carlyle gave to the Valkyrs of Norse myth. When the shades of this momentous night closed in on the Russian fleet, the "Choosers of the Slain" were not far distant, and as the hours crept on, so they have crept on to their grim, appointed task.

In another quarter of an hour it will be midnight. Suddenly the air is rent with a dull explosion. The searchlights of the Russian warships start into radiance, and a rattle of machine guns and small arms follows. The Japanese are attacking with torpedo-boats, and have already succeeded in torpedoing one of Russia's finest battleships! Close to the stronghold, which, at Russia's instance was wrested from Japan in 1895, and which less than three years later was in the Bear's own grip, the Island Nation is dealing her enemy a blow, the tidings of which will to-morrow throw great continents into wonderment and solemn thought.

The scene is one of mingled confusion and deliberate devastation. Japanese torpedo-boats are rushing at full speed along the whole line of Russian ships, and in the distance are now dimly revealed the shapes of four Japanese cruisers, the vanguard of the main fleet under Admiral Togo's command. On these the Russian warships and the forts on shore open fire with their larger guns, while the lighter armaments continue to bark out a savage greeting to the flying torpedo-boats. But the "Choosers of the Slain" dash on, their throbbing engines shaking them from stem to stern, the sea parting in cleft billows from their bows; and two other torpedoes take effect on the great Russian hulls silhouetted against the beams of electric light. The Japanese cruisers open fire at long range, and bursting shells fall among the Russian fleet and the fortifications of the harbour. Their task magnificently accomplished, the torpedo-boats

THE [illegible] OUTSIDE PORT ARTHUR. THE [illegible] OF THE FIRST ATTACK.

Russian battleship entering the harbour through the entrance.

THE BATTLESHIP *RETVISAN*.

return to the attendant squadron, the latter suddenly withdraws, and the Russians are left with their former assumed superiority of naval strength irrevocably destroyed in half an hour. Thus ends the most daring, the most successful torpedo attack in history; ends with a loss to the attackers of but four men killed and fifty-four wounded, and without injury to their brilliantly handled ships.

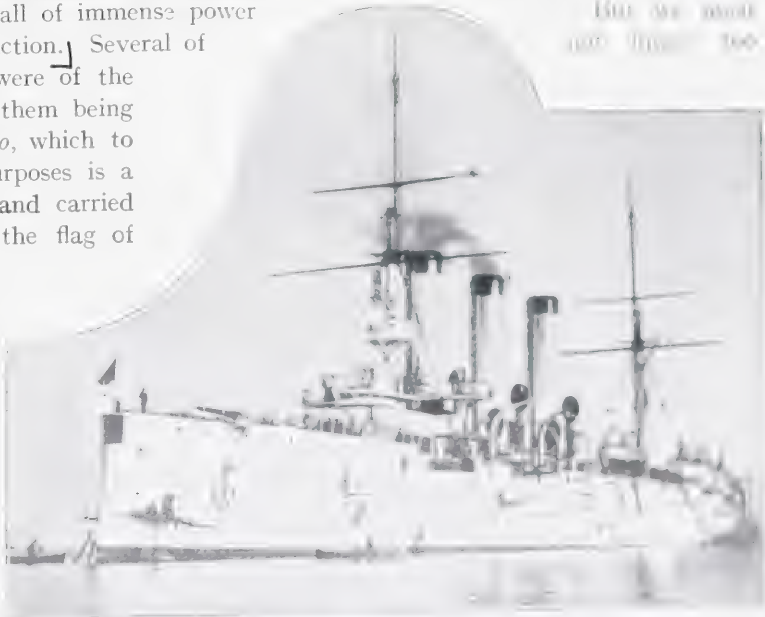
Morning reveals two great Russian battleships—the *Tsarevitch* and *Retvisan*—and the cruiser *Pallada* lying to all appearances hopelessly disabled at the entrance to the harbour. Examination shows that all have received damage which has placed them at least temporarily *hors de combat*; and Admiral Alexeieff, the Tsar's Viceroy of the Far East, is constrained regretfully to telegraph to his Imperial Master the news of an initial and terrible reverse. Nor will it be many hours before the wires tremble with messages of fresh disaster to Holy Russia's arms.

Such an episode as the above has an individual interest of a sufficiently exciting sort. But modern warfare does not tend to the contemplation of isolated battle pictures, especially when the side that has dealt a heavy blow has dealt it on the offensive, and has not been crippled in dealing it. Before they felt the first torpedo shock that Monday night, the Russians had not, we are told, expected an attack for three or four days. Indeed, they may themselves have hoped to take the initiative. But we may be sure that, when that terrible half-hour was over, the first thought in the minds of two-thirds of the Russians in and around Port Arthur was when another onslaught might be made by foes which had already showed themselves so full of dash and daring. Nor had the fleet and forts to wait long before their doubts in this direction were vigorously solved.

The sun rose very red on the morning of the 9th, disclosing on the horizon three two-funnelled cruisers at a distance of several miles. These scouts, from whose masts another Rising Sun—that which is carried on the flag of Japan—fluttered in the chill air, remained calmly taking note of the fleet among which their mosquito comrades had wrought such havoc. For two hours unmolested they remained within long distance range, while the Russians made shift to render aid to their disabled ships, and to prepare for further eventualities. There were, according to an eye-witness, now lying in the roadstead outside Port Arthur five effective battleships, five effective cruisers, one volunteer cruiser, one gun-vessel, one training-ship, and seventeen torpedo-boats and destroyers, the last-named being grouped near the harbour entrance.

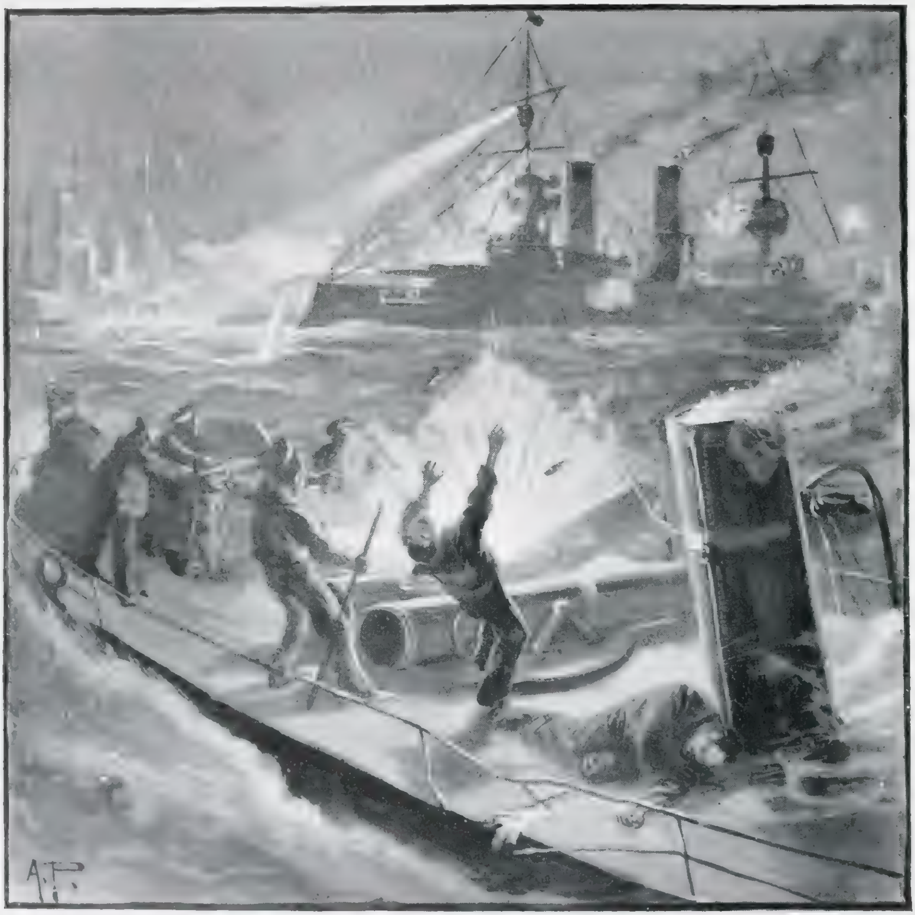
About 11 a.m. the main Japanese fleet swept majestically into view on the horizon, and a glorious sight it must have been. Sixteen magnificent warships were to be descried in battle formation, including Japan's six battleships, *Mikasa*, *Hatsuse*, *Asahi*, *Shikishima*, *Yashima*, and *Fuji*, the first four fitted to meet any vessel afloat, and all of immense power and recent construction. Several of the cruisers also were of the first class, among them being the mighty *Idzumo*, which to all intents and purposes is a small battleship, and carried on this occasion the flag of Rear-Admiral Kamimura, commanding the Second Division. The whole of this splendid fleet was under the command of Vice-Admiral Togo, the "Nelson of Japan," and a very striking personality. It was he who struck the first blow in the China-Japanese War by sinking the transport *Kowshing* with a shot from the *Naniwa*, and at Port Arthur, flying his flag on the great battleship *Mikasa*, he enjoyed the complete confidence of all his countrymen. A short, stout man, silent and reserved in manner, and known to be possessed of splendid courage and resolution, he owes something to British education, for he "went to school" on the British training ship *Worcester*. His right-hand man, Admiral Kamimura, also knows England well, having come to this country when the battleship *Fuji* was building on the Clyde. He was to have taken command of that vessel, but was wanted in Japan, and was urgently recalled. He commanded the cruiser *Akitsushima* in the battle of the Yalu, and has long been looked upon as assured of a brilliant future.

But we must not linger too



long over these personal details. The Russians are waiting to see what the new-comers intend doing, and already their ships are in motion, not with a view of going out to meet the enemy, but in order not to present stationary targets. The gunners in the forts are at their posts, and all is ready either for a game of long bowls or a deadly contest at close quarters. The Japanese know their strength, and also that of the forts behind the Russian fleet. Their option is for a long-distance combat, in which their splendid shooting will give them the advantage.

Between eleven and half-past the game begins. A flash breaks out from one of the Japanese vessels, and 850 lb. of steel drops near the entrance of the harbour where the torpedo-boats are lying. The Russians reply, their cruisers fighting as a first line, their battleships in constant motion in rear, never more than a mile and a half from the shore. The rate of fire on both sides is slow, and it is noticed



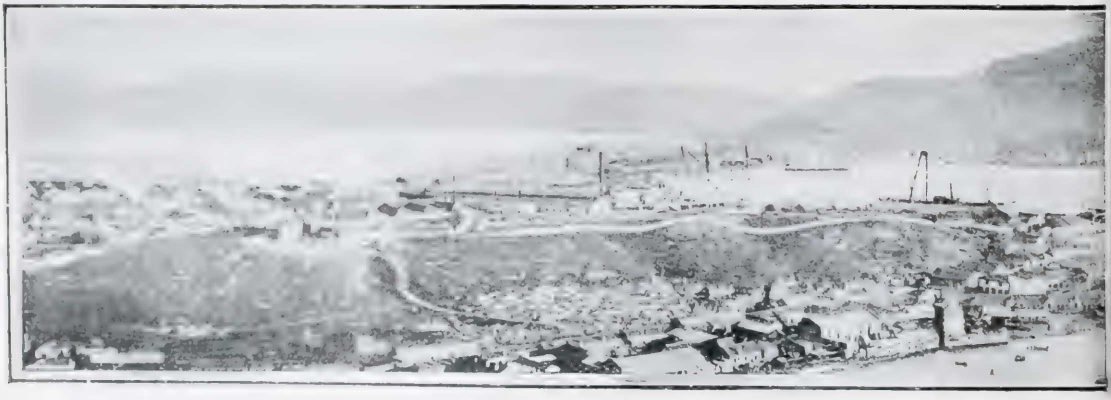
THE NIGHT ATTACK.

THE BATTLESHIP [illegible]

that many of the Russian shells fall short. But the Japanese aim is excellent, and one great Russian ship after another is struck by the terrible shells from the 12-in. guns of the attacking fleet. The forts take their share in this impressive combat. Armed with scores of modern and powerful guns, their batteries vomit discharge after discharge of huge projectiles specially shaped to pierce the armour plating of a warship, and certain of carrying death and destruction if correctly sped on their grim errands: for in them are charges of mélinite, that evil compound of picric acid which not only scatters broadcast the jagged fragments of its steel casing, and rends like paper any resisting substance which the shell has penetrated, but sheds noxious fumes which poison the air and kill men like flies.

In few equal areas are there to be found so many possibilities in the way of "vile guns and villainous saltpetre" as in the works at Port Arthur this Tuesday morning. The surrounding eminences literally bristle with batteries of long-range artillery, those at the harbour entrance being specially formidable. Here there are four monsters of sixty-three tons each, and several batteries of Canet quick-firers, while along the hills that overhang the sea there are simply miles of parapet from the embrasures of which guns are now roaring. But the range is a long one, and the attacking ships present no easy mark. From the forts as well as from the Russian fleet the shots fall ineffectively into the sea water, the shells bursting on impact with the surface but in futile fury.

The Japanese ships are beautifully handled, and their aim is sure. Officers and men, though full of ardour and warlike exultation, perform their tasks as steadily as if at manœuvres, and the captains derive from their two admirals a splendid example of forceful and resolute demeanour. There is no haste and confusion. Gun after gun speaks to good purpose, and levelled glasses show that forts as well as the hostile ships are feeling the effect of the bombardment. It is on the Russian cruisers and battleships that the fire is mainly directed, for it is far more important for Japan to cripple the Russian Navy than it is to inflict such trifling damage as can be inflicted from the sea on fortifications like those of Port Arthur. But, from time to time, a



GENERAL VIEW OF PORT ARTHUR.

heavy shell is hurled into the works overlooking the harbour, and on the summit of one fort two in succession burst with evident effect. Some thirty projectiles are said to have fallen beyond the harbour into the town, and throughout the forty minutes' duration of the bombardment there must be few mortals within the full range of the Japanese guns that do not feel some effect, if only of transient apprehension, from that deliberate, precise, and far-reaching fire.

An episode is furnished by the plucky but rash behaviour of the Russian cruiser, *Novik*, under command of Captain von Essen. Little more than a scout, with practically no protection in the shape of armour, she has the gift of speed, for her boilers are British-built by Thorneycroft, and she can make her twenty-five knots an hour, or could do before this fateful Tuesday. She is described as "rather a pet toy of the Russian Navy," and in her own department should have proved invaluable. But small cruisers are out of place in such actions as these—at any rate when the enemy is of the size and strength here indicated. The *Novik*, with admirable pluck, moves closer in than her comrades to the Japanese fleet, and spits out shell from her four quick-firers, regardless of the [illegible] she is drawing on herself. Alas, poor *Novik*! The mighty *Mikasa* and *Asahi* pour fire on her, and, like a wounded bird, she flutters back heavily to a less prominent position.

Other damage is done to the Russian fleet, from which it is not likely to recover speedily. The *Poltava* battleship is hit below the water-line, and the cruisers *Diana* and *Askold* have also been severely handled. The last-named has been pierced by a shell, and is filling with water. She will presently be pumped out and towed inside the harbour, but in the end will fill again and be of no further use, at any rate for immediate fighting purposes.

It is between noon and one o'clock when the bombardment begins to slacken. Noting the discomfiture of their enemies, the Japanese feel that their task is over for the present, and Admiral Togo gives the signal to retire. In superb formation the great fleet withdraws to the south-eastward, having since a little before midnight put three Russian battleships and four cruisers out of action. The Japanese vessels, as Admiral Togo

SHOWING THE HARBOUR AND NAVAL BASIN.

reports, have suffered very slight damage, and the fighting strength of Japan's Navy has not decreased.⌋

As the conquering warships are steaming in the direction of Talien Bay they meet the steamer *Foochow*, in which the Japanese Consul and some refugees are returning to Chifu. The Consul is puzzled to know why his country's fleet is present in such strength in this quarter, but he presses to the side and leads a cheer for the Mikado as the fleet sweeps past. Pleased and proud must Admiral Togo's officers and men have been to receive this the earliest patriotic greeting that followed the achievement of their grand exploit, and doubly proud and pleased the happy Japanese on board the *Foochow* to learn afterwards that they had been the first to felicitate their countrymen on Japan's opening victory in the struggle with her gigantic foe.

A word must be given to the effect of the news of these two engagements upon the nations of Europe, more especially upon those allied with the two combatants. As a matter of history it may be recorded that the tidings of the torpedo attack was the first intimation received in the Western world that hostilities had actually commenced. It came in the form of a reproduction of Admiral Alexeieff's telegram briefly announcing to his Imperial Master the delivery of the attack and the damage sustained by the fleet. Needless to say, it created a very great impression, which has sensibly increased by the report of the subsequent bombardment. On all sides the striking demonstration given of the value of the torpedo was

Photo: The Topical Press Photo Agency

TALIEN BAY.

eagerly discussed, and it was significantly recalled that the Russian Navy had always prided itself on its own potentialities in the way of torpedo warfare.

Throughout Great Britain the initial success of the gallant Japanese aroused a strong feeling of admiration, but there was not wanting a disposition to sympathise with Russia in her great calamity, and to admire the fortitude with which the first bad news was received in St. Petersburg.

From the expert standpoint there was little to discuss beyond the great central fact that Russia had lost, in all probability hopelessly, any chance of gaining and retaining the Command of the Sea in Far Eastern waters. It was further recognised that a country which at the outset had used its naval strength with such brilliant effect as had Japan, was not likely to forego any advantage which naval superiority would give it.

Even France, with all her loyalty to her Russian ally, could not fail to be impressed with the splendid audacity of the first attack on Port Arthur. The admiration of a people so keenly appreciative of courage and *élan* could hardly be withheld from a deed so astonishing in its conception and execution alike.

And what of Russia herself? Her own Press bears eloquent testimony to the self-restraint and control with which the Russian people bore the shock of the first grievous news. According to one correspondent, it was strikingly like the aspect of the British public in the "dark days" of December, 1899. "There is," he writes, "the same silent wondering look on the faces one passes in the streets, the same doubts both of the known and the unknown, but the same tightening of the lips in grim determination to 'see this thing through.' Moreover, there is the same quiet, resolute confidence that whatever is happening now, the ultimate result must and should be unaffected."

In the presence of such feelings thus expressed, harsh criticism may well be hushed. The respect for patriotic sorrow deepens as we read how, on the morrow of the first disaster, the Tsar and Tsaritsa proceeded sorrowfully to the church of the Winter Palace, and there, in a service of solemn intercession, knelt in supplication for Heaven's mercy on an enterprise already tinged with dark misfortune.

SEOUL, FROM THE SOUTH GATE.

CHAPTER II.

JAPANESE LANDING IN KOREA—DOOMED RUSSIAN WARSHIPS—ACTION OFF CHEMULPO.

THE landing of Japanese infantry at Chemulpo, to which brief allusion has been made in our Prelude, was a picturesquely significant operation. Significant, since it demonstrated in very striking fashion the excellent military organisation of Japan, the forethought of her departmental officials, and the wonderful precision and attention to detail to which she has attained even in the difficult art of carrying out combined naval and military processes. To land even a handful of troops at Chemulpo at the best of times would be no easy task, but to carry out such an important disembarkation as this without a hitch, and in six or seven hours, was a feat which cannot but have been noted with approval by the numerous foreign experts in such matters who witnessed it.

As for picturesqueness, the surroundings were of themselves impressive. Yonder in the channel anchorage were the foreign warships watching with mixed feelings a proceeding with which two of them, at least, would willingly have interfered. Nearer inshore were the transports, screened from possible interruption by Japanese cruisers and torpedo-boats, while at the mouth of the harbour lay three of Admiral Uriu's ships anchored a mile apart. With marvellous swiftness the transports discharge their freight of sturdy Jap soldiers in new grey uniforms, with dark yellow-braided, star-pointed caps, white putties, and sheepskin neck mufflers. Silence is observed, and the disembarkation generally is the perfection of orderliness. A bright effect is produced by the lighting of paper lanterns on the wharf, with numbers showing the different mooring places for the barges carrying the troops ashore. As the troops land they are marched quickly off to their billets, arrangements for which have already been made by the Japanese houses at Chemulpo. To quote another detail from the vigorous description given by Mr. M'Kenzie, the War Correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, log fires are kindled at short intervals along the water front, paraffin continually thrown on the coal fires burning in iron cradles on the wharf sends up great tongues of flame, while the scheme of illumination is quaintly diversified by the intensely white "flashlight" exposures of an American photographer correspondent!

Soon after midnight the landing is completed, and General Yasutsuma Kigoshi, commanding the troops, retires to rest in his temporary headquarters from which [illegible] to lead his fine fellows to Seoul.

Before the troops are ashore Rear-Admiral Uriu has taken definite action with regard to the Russian ships in the harbour. At 4 a.m. he sends a message to Captain Roudneff, commanding the *Variag*, to say that if the latter ship and the *Korietz* remain in the harbour after twelve o'clock he will attack them.

It is, indeed, a melancholy position in which the representatives of proud Russia's Navy are now placed. Success is out of the question except by a miracle, and Captain Roudneff probably realises that Japan would never have attempted such a landing as she has just carried out unless she had taken care that the main body of Russia's fleet were occupied elsewhere. This Captain Roudneff is a fine fellow, an old shipmate of Admiral Alexeieff, who has only recently been given the command of the *Variag*. A man of great force of character and firmness of disposition, he takes no long time making up his mind in these difficult circumstances. He knows well that both

THE [illegible]

his ship and the *Korietz* are doomed, but he resolves that their end shall be worthy of the Russian flag. To lose the *Korietz* is no great matter. After seventeen years of service that insignificant gunboat is not worth much to Russia, even in the Far East, but it must be with a real pang that the gallant sailor thinks of the fate which is awaiting his own fine ship, which was only laid down at Cramp's famous yard at Philadelphia four or five years ago, and is one of the fastest vessels in the Russian Navy. With something of a heavy heart, we may be sure, the necessary orders are given, and half an hour before noon the two vessels are steaming out through the narrow and difficult entrance to the port.

But before the *Varyag* and *Kareitz* leave the company of the foreign warships, an episode occurs which marks the coming conflict with a distinctive touch of mingled pathos and sublimity. They are going to almost certain death, the brave fellows on these doomed ships; the ships themselves will soon, well-nigh inevitably, be frightfully mauled by their powerful antagonists—but the band on the *Varyag* strikes up the Russian National Anthem as she steams out majestically to meet her fate, and the strains of "God Save the Emperor!" are the stirring overture to a stirring, if one-sided, fight.

There is not much need to prolong the tale of what follows. Close to noon comes the first shot in the running battle which ensues between the Russian ships and Admiral Uriu's squadron which is pressing on their heels. From twelve to half-past the firing is fast and furious, the *Korietz*, as well as the *Varyag*, making a most plucky fight, and apparently escaping with much less damage than her big consort. But here again, as at Port Arthur, Russian gunnery proves deficient. With her turn of speed the *Varyag* might conceivably have succeeded in disabling one or more of her antagonists, while the *Korietz* has at least two quick-firing guns of considerable calibre. No serious damage, however, appears to be inflicted by either ship, while the Japanese deal some cruel blows, especially on the *Varyag*.

At 12.30 the firing becomes more desultory, and by this time the Russian ships, which have sought the shelter of the neighbouring Polynesian Islands, are showing signs of distress. Shortly afterwards the guns on both sides are silent, and the *Varyag* and *Korietz* are seen returning to the harbour. The Japanese squadron remains outside.

Listing heavily to port the *Varyag* struggles into the channel where the neutral warships are lying, and anchors. The *Korietz* does the same a few furlongs off, and to the experienced eyes of the observers on the *Talbot*, *Vicksburg*, *Pascal*, and *Elba*, the end is not far off. The *Varyag* has been punished frightfully, shells having struck her in the bows and low down in the stern, while the *débris* on deck, caused by the bursting of another shell on the bridge, is said to resemble that of a machine shop.

As the *Varyag* afterwards is found to be sinking, and the *Korietz* is on fire, the crews are taken off and received on board the neutral cruisers. The casualties are very numerous, brave Captain Roudneff being among the wounded. The *Sungari*, a Russian transport lying in the harbour, is set on fire and abandoned.

At 4 o'clock the *Korietz*, the fire having spread to her magazine, blows up. The Russian crew from the decks of the *Pascal* sing the National Anthem as the frag-

[illegible]

CHEMULPO

ments of their gallant little ship strew the waters of the harbour.

At 6.30 the *Varyag*, said to have been set on fire, sinks. The *Sungari* follows.

So ends the eventful evening of February 9th, a day which has seen two naval battles fought, and nine Russian warships put out of action. A terrible lesson in naval warfare this, and one which will linger long in the memories even of those not privileged to witness these tremendous sights, as so many spectators both at Port Arthur and Chemulpo were. But, perhaps, the memory which will survive the longest is that of the Russian sailors who went out to fight their last fight, went out to death, perhaps to agony—for torturing agony is what death on board a stricken warship sometimes means—singing "God Save the Emperor!"

ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF, THE TSAR'S VICEROY IN THE FAR EAST.

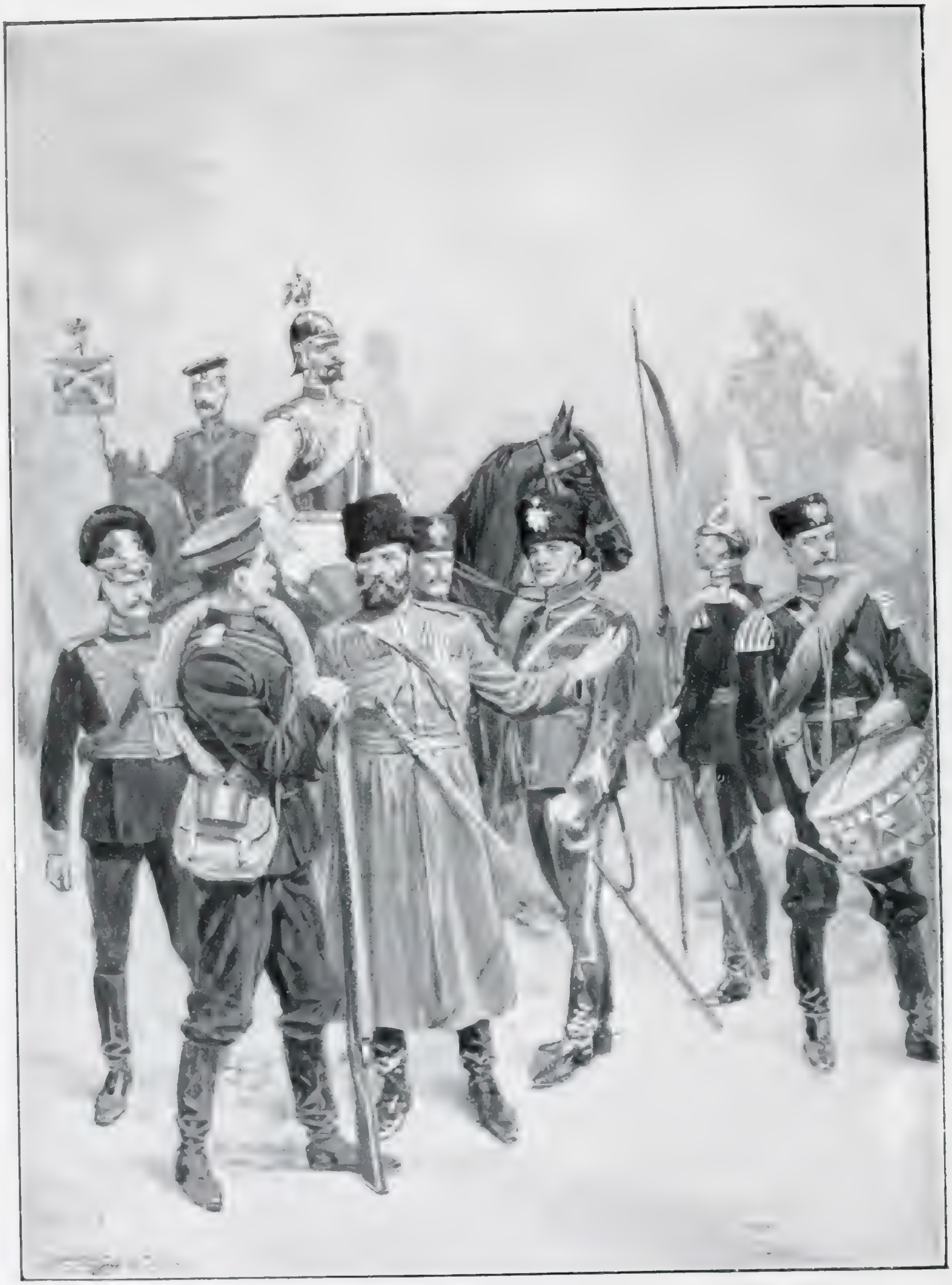
CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER LOSS TO RUSSIA—MORE NAVAL MOVEMENTS—A DOUBTFUL EXPLOIT.

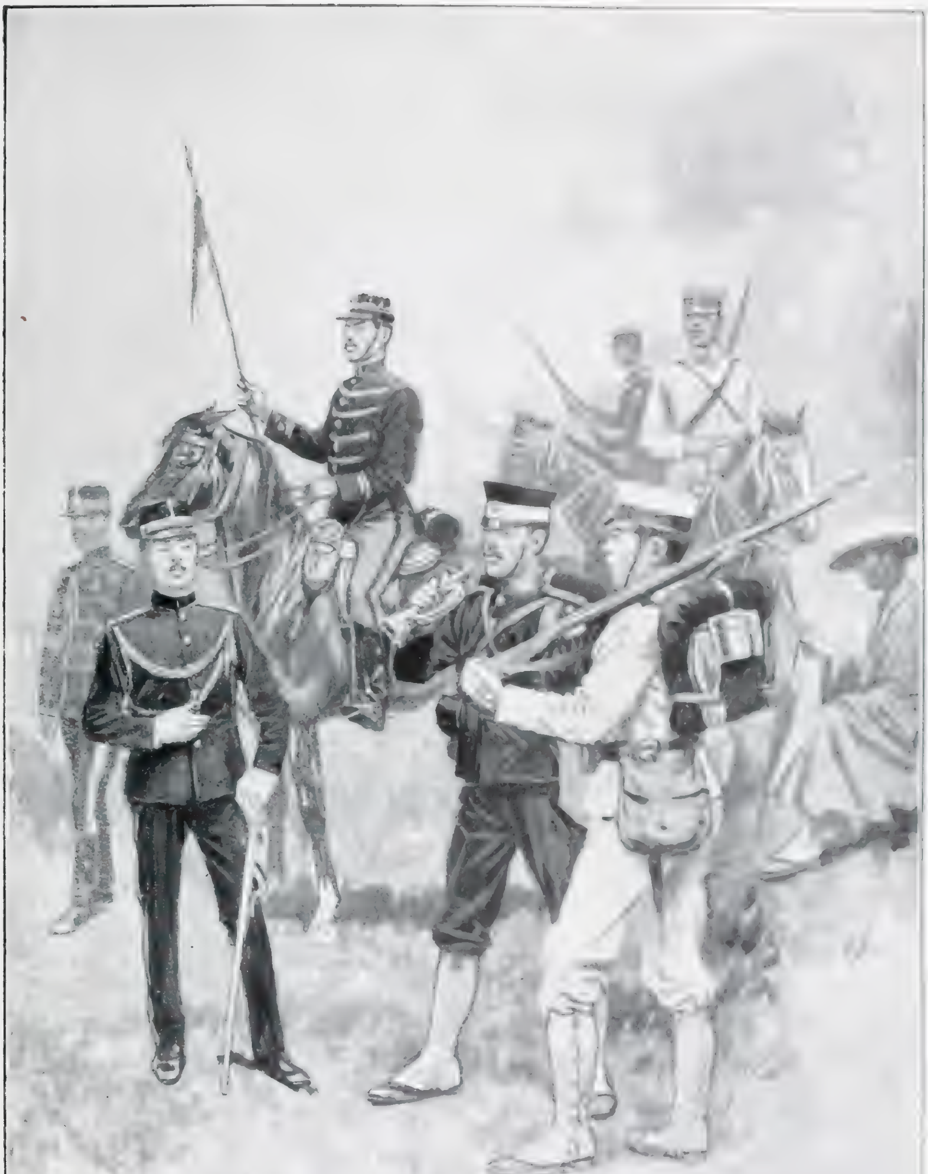
ON February 11th Admiral Alexeieff at Port Arthur is beginning to feel severely the pinch of adverse fortune. Three times already he has been compelled "devotedly to inform" his Imperial Master of heavy casualties to Russia's Navy. He has succeeded in bringing the ships injured in the attacks of the 8th and 9th into the inner harbour, and he has telegraphed to the Tsar optimistic messages as to the speed and completeness with which the necessary repairs can be effected. But he knows, of course, that, even supposing the legs and wings of his crippled ducks can be healed sufficiently to enable them to waddle or paddle out of harbour, most of them will never again be the strong waterfowl they were. He realises all too well that such naval supremacy as Russia possessed has passed like a dream, never to return except, possibly, as a dream. A magnificently successful Russian official, he is fully aware that at home he has many enemies who will not scruple to make the most of the Port Arthur and Chemulpo losses, and seek to belittle him in the eyes of the nervous and vacillating Tsar. How different his position to-day from what it was but a few months back, when, as newly appointed Viceroy, he reviewed the most powerful fleet ever assembled by Russia in those waters, and an army not far short of a hundred thousand strong! Well may the Admiral begin to show signs of breaking down under a strain which even in peace-time is one calculated to keep the strongest mind in a constant state of tension.

And now, with war begun, the Command of the Sea irrevocably lost, the mobilisation even of the Siberian Army Corps barely commenced, the Japanese triumphantly ranging the waters of the Far East with their victorious and unscathed ships and landing troops by thousands almost at any point they choose, with reports arriving daily of the "kinking" of the "gossamer thread" of railway on which the present life and future reinforcement of the Russian Army east of Lake Baikal depends with all these ghastly anxieties, the great Admiral-Administrator, who a few weeks back stood so near to the Tsar himself in power, and towered a head and shoulders above most of Russia's greatest bureaucrats, feels terribly the weight of the galling crisis, in the creation of which he himself played such a vigorously domineering part.

Fortune lays about her sometimes with a flail, and another stroke comes upon Alexeieff this morning. One clear day has passed since the bombardment of Port Arthur, and a reconnaissance has revealed no further traces of the Japanese fleet. It has probably dawned upon the Viceroy that, in the battered condition of his ships, every effort should be made to block entrances which might be forced with serious results by the Japanese



TYPES OF
RUSSIAN SOLDIERS.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TYPES OF
JAPANESE SOLDIERS.

torpedo-boats, if not by heavier craft. Accordingly, renewed activity is being displayed in the matter of submarine mining, and special care is being taken to close the entrance of Talien Bay in order to hinder an attack on Dalny.

Submarine mines are of various kinds, but clearly those that are being laid in Talien Bay are of the "contact" variety. These mines are constructed to explode directly any vessel comes into contact with them, very considerable ingenuity being generally expended in their arrangement to this dramatic end. Sometimes they are so laid that they rise and fall with the tide, and, of course, the greatest care must be exercised to prevent their fouling one another when swayed by various currents. To be efficacious a mine should be submerged so that it floats at some distance from the surface of the water, and it goes without saying that the invisibility thus secured is apt at times to prove a double-edged tool.

Photo. The Imperial News Agency.

STREET VIEW IN VLADIVOSTOK.

The vessel engaged in mine-laying in Talien Bay is of novel and special construction. She is called the *Yenisei*, and is a two-funnelled steamer of 2,500 tons, with a crew of over a hundred men. She is only lightly armed with 12-pounders and smaller guns, but she is a new and valuable ship, and has on board a quantity of costly stores. Her appearance is rather singular, for she has a long over-hanging counter, through which the mines are lowered.

Captain Stepanoff, who is in command of the *Yenisei*, is engaged in his difficult and delicate work when he perceives that one of the mines in the "field" in which he is working has risen to the surface, and thus become a pointer to a hostile ship. The only course to be taken is to blow up this faulty mine, and Captain Stepanoff moves his ship nearer for that purpose.

Before, however, he can effect his object, an earlier and unpremeditated explosion takes place! The *Yenisei* has run heedlessly on a mine well and truly laid, which fulfils its deadly mission with tragic thoroughness. The bows of the devoted ship have caused the ignition of, perhaps, a hundred pounds of gun-cotton, part of the vessel is blown into the air, and what is left of her sinks rapidly. There is no time to take measures for saving life, and only a few survivors of this ghastly calamity are afterwards picked up. The list of those th[illegible] includes the commander, Captain Stepanoff, the chief engineer, two midshipmen, and ninety-two of the crew.

Well may Alexeieff stagger under this fresh blow, one of peculiar significance in view of the criticisms which in Russia will be launched against him for not having already used mines to greater effect in the defence of Port Arthur and so, perhaps, have checked, at any rate, the midnight attack on the 8th.

The Viceroy's hope of being able to make good use of the fleet at Port Arthur is rapidly diminishing, but there is yet a chance that Russia may score some success by sea against her able adversary. At Vladivostok there are four formidable ships, two of which the Japanese and

[illegible]

TALIENWAN AND THE RUSSIAN FORTIFICATIONS.

the *Rossia*, are of over 12,000 tons displacement. Both these are armoured cruisers, and the former is of modern type. The *Rossia* flies the flag of Rear-Admiral Baron Shtakelberg, the commander of the squadron, and, like the *Gromoboi*, carries enough coal to take her at least 4,000 miles. The other two ships are the armoured cruiser, *Rurik*, of about 11,000 tons, and the protected cruiser, *Bogatyr*, of rather under 7,000 tons, but with a sea speed of 20 knots. Altogether a formidable squadron, provided it can keep out of the way of the main Japanese fleet.

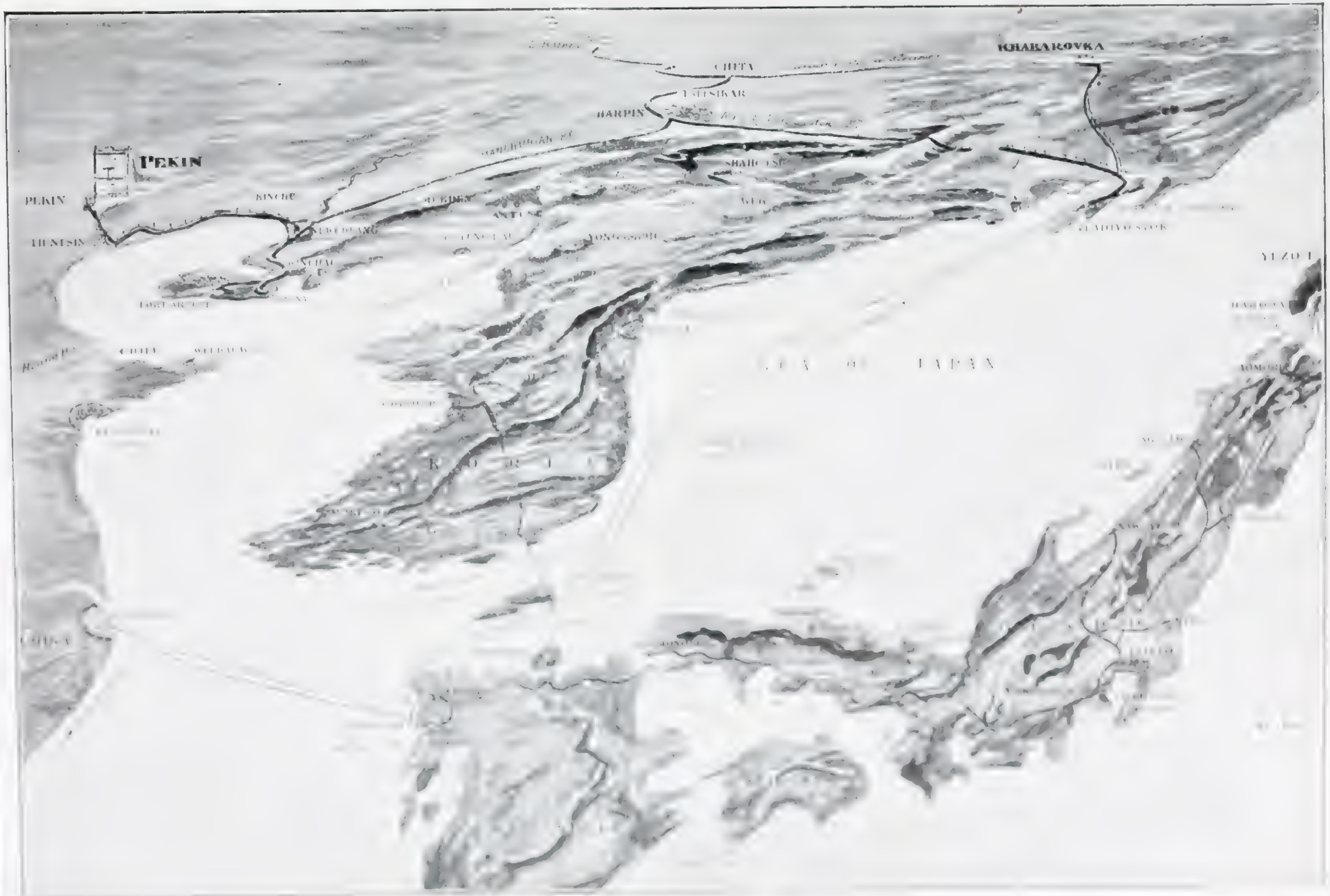
Photo: Mr. J. Foster Fraser.

VLADIVOSTOK.

Admiral Alexeieff knows that, contrary rumours notwithstanding, this squadron has left the ice-bound harbour of Vladivostok, and he is doubtless hoping eagerly to hear of its accomplishment of some brilliant exploit, or at any rate of some vigorously-dealt blow at Japan's naval strength.

The first reported act of Baron Shtakelberg's command does not very fully bear out this sanguine anticipation. On this same February 11th two small Japanese steamers, an old 1,000 ton ship, the *Nakanoura Maru*, built in 1865, and a poor little 300 ton boat, called the *Zensho Maru*, are sailing from Sakata in the province of Uzen to Otaru in Yezo, on apparently purely mercantile business. They should be secure if only by reason of Japan's chivalrous action in giving Russian merchantmen the freedom of the seas until the 16th of the month. The conduct of Russia in this incident presents a painful contrast to that of Japan.

As they creep along the coast in company, these harmless merchantmen come in sight of the Vladivostok squadron.


KHABAROVKA
CHITA
TSITSIKAR
HARPIN
PEKIN
PEKIN
TIENTSIN
KINCHU
MUKDEN
ANTUNG
NEWCHWANG
PORT ARTHUR
CHEFU
WEIHAIWEI
VLADIVOSTOK
SEA OF JAPAN
YEZO I.
HAKODATE
AOMORI
TOKIO
CHINA

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE THEATRE OF WAR

The four big men-of-war surround the hapless little steamers, and deliberately shell them. The *Nakanoura Maru* is sunk, but the *Zensho Maru* contrives to get away from the great bullies which have destroyed her comrade, and tells at Fuku-yama the sad and shameful story of the attack.

It need hardly be said that this performance on the part of the Vladivostok squadron was not only viewed with considerable contempt in Europe, but excited the warmest indignation in Tokio. The Japanese Legations abroad were promptly informed of the occurrence, and the Government of the Mikado made no secret of its intention to take the severest measures of reprisal for what may well be regarded in the circumstances as an act of absolute piracy. That in any case the two unarmed merchantmen should have been attacked, and that one of them — which, it is expressly stated, had hauled down its flag — should have been deliberately sent to the bottom with her passengers and crew, is an ineffaceable blot upon the history of the Russian Navy. But that such an act should have been perpetrated in the face of Japan's fine exhibition of international comity, makes it simply amazing that an opportunity was not immediately sought by the Government of the Tsar to repudiate the offence.

GENERAL KUROPATKIN.

It may be recorded in passing that the exploit of these four cruisers cost Russia a heavy price. Japan had captured five Russian merchantmen and had taken them to Sasebo, with the intention of releasing them in a few days' time, when the danger of their carrying away war news was over. On receipt of the news of the sinking of the *Nakanoura Maru* these five vessels were simply handed over to the appointed Prize Court, and, while public outbursts of indignation were officially deprecated, it was clear that a stiff rate of interest would be charged in settling Japan's account with the Vladivostok squadron.

As for the valiant squadron itself, after lingering for a short time in the Tsugaru Straits, it retired, its departure doubtless being accelerated by the arrival of a portion of the Japanese fleet off Hakodate, which it was feared was in danger of bombardment.

Let us now return to Port Arthur, where things are going from bad to worse, and where complications innumerable are arising. Strange tales are told of the state of the town in the days that followed the attacks of the 8th and 9th --tales illustrative of the excitement and nervousness prevalent in the highest circles of authority. Certain it is that agitation prevailed elsewhere. In the dockyard, of course, some semblance of busy orderliness prevailed; but even here the frantic efforts made to hasten the repairs to the damaged ships generated confusion and disturbance, heightened by the growing reluctance of the Chinese to work for Russian masters, or to sell provisions and cattle. The railway was still open, but overcrowded with fugitives. There was talk of a scarcity of forage, and doubts were being expressed as to the endurance of the water supply.

THE DOCK, PORT ARTHUR, FROM THE PUBLIC GARDENS.

Admiral Alexeieff appears to have done all that could be done by an overworked and harassed man to stem the growing feeling of apprehension, and to cope with the constant complications arising from Russian unpreparedness. Cheering, if imaginative, reports were circulated among the soldiery, and a stirring appeal made to their patriotism and strong religious convictions. Captain von Essen, the commander of the *Novik*, was publicly commended for his gallantry in the action of the morning of the 9th, and every effort was made to represent the situation as one which, in spite of temporary reverses, was full of [illegible] hopes of victory for Russia.

But as the first week of war draws to its close, the Viceroy finds it more and more difficult to preserve the semblance of a calm demeanour. He has severely censured Admiral Stark, who is still in command of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, and who, it is whispered, will soon be superseded. But such a relief to his feelings can only remind him rather painfully of the responsibilities attached to his own proud position. He knows that at St. Petersburg there is a popular hero—General Kuropatkin, now Minister of War—who would have been appointed to the military command in the Far East had it not been inconvenient to subordinate him to the sailor Viceroy. It is a bitter reflection that the events of a few short days may have undermined a position which seemed stronger than that of many a monarch, and may have brought Skobeleff's former brilliant lieutenant into such overwhelming favour at home that supersession of Alexeieff himself may soon be freely discussed.

Something of added bitterness lies in the memory of the *status quo ante bellum* as far as not only Japan but China is concerned. Will not he, Alexeieff, be blamed not only for Russia's humiliation at the hands of the Japanese Navy, but also for the loss of influence at Peking, which one Russian Minister after another has been industriously trying to conserve?

To the company of such sombre thoughts we leave the Russian Viceroy on the evening of Saturday, February 13th. A snowstorm is raging, and Port Arthur shivering in its white mantle must be, temporarily at least, secure from all but internal disturbances.

ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF TALKING WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS.

Photo: The Imperial News Agency.

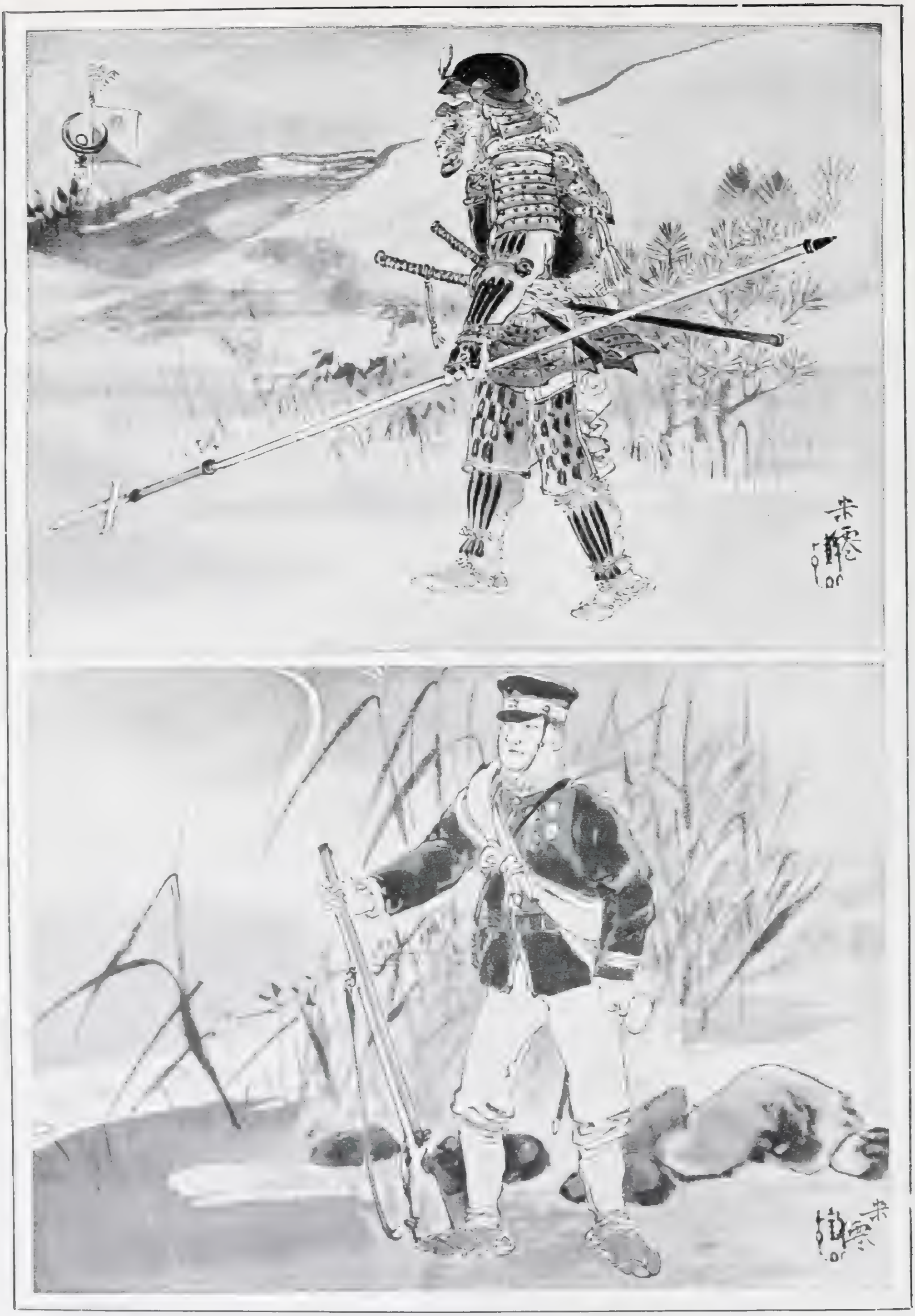
JAPANESE SOLDIERS ON THE MARCH

CHAPTER IV.

A WEEK OF WAR—A BRIEF RETROSPECT—HOW AN ISLAND NATION MADE READY—A LESSON WRIT LARGE.

ALTHOUGH the first shot was not fired till the afternoon of February 8th, and the first real collision did not take place until some seven hours later, it is sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes to say, as we have done in our last chapter, that the first week of the war ended on the evening of the 13th. For it subsequently transpired from one of Admiral Togo's despatches that the Japanese fleet, which did such execution at Port Arthur on the Monday, had left Sasebo on the previous Saturday, February 6th. Practically speaking, then, by the evening of the 13th the Japanese, at any rate, had been at war for just a week, and this chronological statement seems one which may be usefully emphasised here. In the first place, it will enable as to resume our narrative in a succeeding chapter with an account of an exploit hardly less stirring than the first torpedo-boat attack described in Chapter I. Secondly, it seems clearly to justify a very brief retrospect by way of indicating certain pregnant lessons more sharply than is possible in a pure and simple narrative.

It does not seem necessary to recapitulate the broad facts of the foregoing pages. There is nothing more wearying than the bald iteration of war calamities and casualties, and, when we say that in this week the Japanese gained the command of the sea, we have said nearly all that is to be said, even from the lofty standpoint of the expert, as to the fighting history of these seven days. But



OLD JAPAN AND NEW JAPAN:

A Warrior of the Period Ka-ei, 1848-1854, with hooded visor-mask; and a Sergeant of the Infantry of the Line, in field service order, as in the early part of the War with China, 1894. (From drawings executed by Kubota Beisen, for use in "The New Far East," by Arthur Diosy.)

there is much in the situation created by the smashing onslaught of Japan upon her great, aggressive enemy which has a singular piquancy, more especially for the allied Island Nation of the West.

We Britons have been fighting on land and sea for a good many centuries. We need go back no further than the Norman Invasion, when both the land-fyrd—the militia of the shires—and the ship-fyrd were called out, and the one guarded the coasts while the other cruised in the Channel, very much as might have happened in the case of Japan under slightly altered circumstances. We, of all nations, then, ought not to be content with merely looking at the Russo-Japanese War as a gladiatorial combat. At every point of that tremendous contest there is something of real instruct[illegible] ing nations of [illegible] and particularly to ourselves. No pretence will be made of dealing at all thoroughly with such lessons here. But at convenient junctures it may serve a useful purpose if we endeavour briefly and brightly to show how and why such and such things occurred, and what influence was exercised upon their occurrence by national character and national effort.

Photo: The Imperial News Agency.

WAR-SHIP IN DOCK AT NAGASAKI.

Mr. Diósy, in his Introduction, has given us a striking picture of the circumstances in which Japan was drawn into this epoch-making war, and he has indicated with sufficient clearness that in meeting the manifold, the almost overwhelming responsibility she has now incurred, the "spirit of old Japan" will be ready demonstrated. But when we come to examine the stern realities of a week like that we are now reviewing, it is transparently clear that we have other forces to take into account, besides Japan's conviction that the present is for her a struggle of life and death, besides her patriotism, her warlike ardour, and the dash and daring of her sons.

It is easy to say that the matter is a simple one of preparedness, and that Japan offered no more striking spectacle in this respect than did Prussia in 1870. But, in the first place, Prussia was only ready on land, and, secondly, Japan had not the basis of tradition and experience to work upon, as the sealed pattern of European military efficiency had. If we wish to find the secret of Japan's success, we must reckon her national character and other racial advantages in the same column with a variety of other attributes, such as her insular position and her possession of fine harbours, and then multiply the total by her splendid assimilation of large ideas, her perfect grasp of the true principles of fighting preparedness.

When Japan, on the evening of February 6th, sent out a big fleet to Port Arthur, which marked the despatch of troops, duly escorted by warships, to Chemulpo, she gave even Great Britain a lesson, which the latter cannot afford to neglect. Negotiations had only just been broken off, and yet Japan struck right and left with perfect confidence and perfect success. Why? Because she was ready, of course; but that is not all the answer. It was because she was completely ready as regards both her fighting services, and not only that, but had first-rate home bases to work from, and every sort of convenience in the way of transport and supply that forethought of the most penetrating kind could suggest.

It is not so very long ago that the Japanese bought their first steamship from us. It was taken out by a British crew, and, when it arrived, the Japanese made haste to learn how the engines worked, and then urgently demanded that the British officers and men who had been "coaching" them should go ashore. Forthwith, the new crew set the engines in motion, and, having but imperfectly grasped the method of stopping them, were in some danger of coming to grief. But the helmsman was equal to the occasion. Instead of running the ship on shore, he merely took her round and round in great circles until her fires went out! When from this picture we turn to the magnificent apparition of the Japanese fleet in line of battle off Port Arthur on the morning of February 9th, 1904, we not only perceive the difference between a childish effort and a masterpiece, but begin to have an inkling of some of the "reason why" of the latter's evolution.

Another strange and instructive contrast is afforded by a glance first at the conditions of soldier service under "old Japan," and then at the perfection of military organisation to which Japan has shown herself for at least ten years past to have attained. There is an interesting passage in Lord Wolseley's Autobiography in which he relates his impressions of a visit to Japan in 1860-1, at the close of our war with China. He speaks as so many other travellers and historians have done, of the great Daimios, or Princes, with their crowds of Yaconins or retainers who wore their Daimio's crest, and "as a rule got drunk about sundown," after which it was dangerous for a foreigner to walk abroad lest one of these fine fellows "might take it in his head to cut you down." There is as much difference between the Yaconin of forty years ago and the Jap soldier of to-day as between a British "gentleman in khaki" and the retainers of a feudal baron. But it has taken us a good deal longer than the Japanese to span that difference.

National character goes for a great deal, but it may be said that, in some directions, it was by the stern repression of her national character that Japan succeeded in preparing herself so thoroughly for this conflict with one of the greatest Powers of the world.

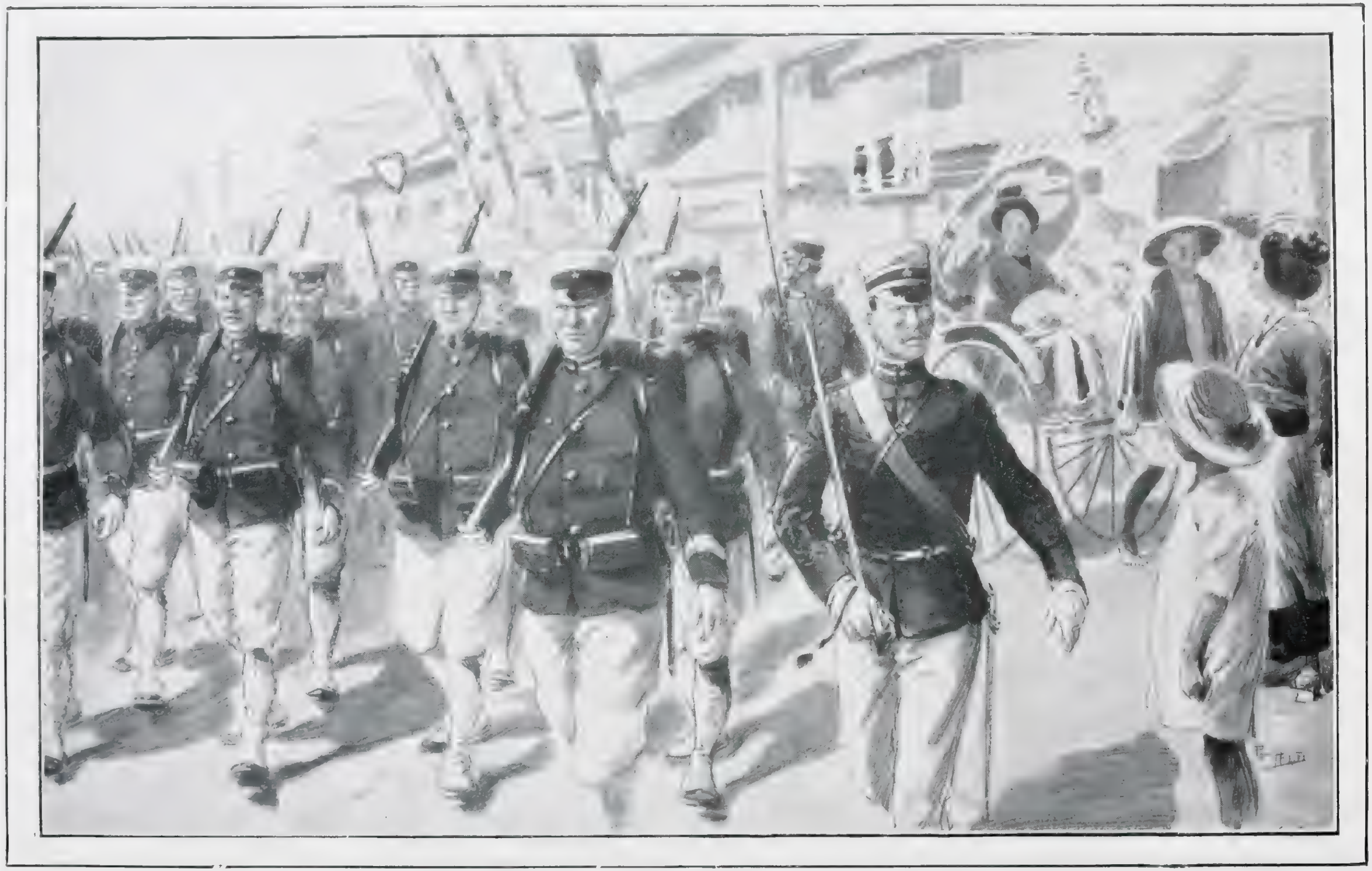
ADMIRAL TERAUCHI, JAPANESE MINISTER OF WAR

Here is a picture drawn in the *Daily Telegraph* by Rear-Admiral Ingles, formerly Naval Adviser to the Japanese Government. A battalion is leaving the principal railway station at Tokio for service at the front:—

"Suddenly the ordinary travelling public are instructed to wait a little, and the turnstiles are locked. The public turn back and chat, not in the least disconcerted. At last the great iron gates at the end of the platform are opened, and at the same time the head of the battalion appears. It marches straight on till the leading company arrives at the front carriage. The battalion is halted, turns towards the train; in a moment the train is packed as full as it can hold. The guard whistles, the train moves off. There are no crowds on the platform, no women—no band playing 'The girl I left behind me.' 'All is quiet, all is great.' Everything betokens order and quiet determination. Now the train has gone, the great gates are shut, the turnstiles are opened, the next ordinary passengers' train is ready to depart 'on time.'"

Surely there is repression of the bright Japanese character in all this, the sort of repression which betokens terrible earnestness and makes for strong achievement.

How Japan sprang to war is lightly sketched in the foregoing those chapters. How she prepared for that spring, how she trained her every muscle, how she dieted herself, how she kept close reckoning of her weight and measurements—some "sporting" metaphors which seem appropriate—would take much space, and might, perhaps, prove wearisome. It is sufficient for the purposes of this running record to say that while, as a rule, the first week of any great war shows clearly where the main deficiencies in the way of preparation are, there is as yet no sign of weakness in Japanese methods. Warships have proved all that warships should be, and torpedo-boats, built by Japan herself, have splendidly stood the strain of service under the worst conditions. Such repairs as have been necessary in war-



JAPANESE MARCHING THROUGH TOKIO.

4

[illegible]

ships injured in action have been promptly taken in hand and speedily effected, a fact which in itself indicates the most elaborate and skilful prevision. Armament and equipment have evidently been the subject of the closest attention and the most liberal expenditure on the part of a nation possessing by no means exceptional wealth. It is an interesting circumstance in this last connection that, when the tension between Russia and Japan was beginning to become severe, and war was not only growing possible but probable, an English firm, which had for some years been supplying Japan with shells, regarded it as certain that it would now receive an increased order. The contrary happened. Not even the usual supply was requisitioned. Japan had all she wanted. She had been for ten years or so making ready. She *was* ready, and the first week of war demonstrated her readiness in a fashion from which we may, nay must, take a lesson.

There is another direction in which Japan has worked hard and long, one in which every nation has its own peculiar methods, but in which the Japanese have attained perfection. "Why should we land troops near Port Arthur for the purposes of reconnaissance?" asked a Japanese officer, in reply to an inquiry from a newspaper representative. "We know all there is to be known about Port Arthur already." The spy, or, as he is sometimes called, the collector of "intelligence," does not get, as a rule, all the credit he deserves. But it may be that future recognition will not be wanting to the numerous Jap officers, and countless agents of lower degree, who, disguised as Chinamen, and by other devices, have penetrated the most secret details of the Russian occupation of Manchuria, and have supplied their Government with a service of information, political, naval, military, and topographical, probably unrivalled in the annals of international espionage.

Photo: The Topical Press Photo Agency.

ON GUARD.

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JAPANESE TORPEDO DESTROYER.

CHAPTER V.

AN ERRAND OF DESTRUCTION—A DASH INTO THE NIGHT—[illegible] THROUGH [illegible] SNOW—TORPEDO ATTACKS AT DAWN—ATTEMPT TO "[illegible]" PORT ARTHUR—MORE BOMBARDMENTS.

AT the Japanese naval base there is an atmosphere of suppressed excitement as the night of February 13th closes in. Getting up steam in readiness for an immediate start is a small flotilla of those wicked-looking craft known as torpedo-boat destroyers, of which one or more fine specimens may be seen pretty constantly in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth and other of our own great harbours. Long, low vessels, specially engined and armed so that they can overtake and destroy the smaller torpedo-boats, they are themselves fitted with torpedo tubes, and are thus enabled to perform the same functions as the "mosquitoes," with the added advantage of being able to stand a heavier sea.

The midnight attack at Port Arthur on the 8th was carried out by torpedo-boats. The Japanese battleships and cruisers have also been in action, and have grandly distinguished themselves. The "destroyers" have been eagerly awaiting their chance, and now it seems to be drawing very near. For Admiral Togo has issued orders that a flotilla under the command of Rear-Admiral Nagai shall dash into Port Arthur and wreak what destruction it can among the remnants of the damaged Russian Fleet in the harbour. It is easy to imagine the glorious thrill of exultation and [illegible]-like hope which runs through the little flotilla as the order is made known. The commission is one of [illegible]. It goes without saying that the Russians will now be [illegible] on their guard [illegible] when the little torpedo-boats dashed in among them. A destroyer, too, presents a much better mark than a torpedo-boat. But the Japanese sailor, like our own Jack Tar, is sublimely forgetful of risk in such an enterprise. For him the whole prospect is one of tingling anticipation, of foreshadowed joy in rushing through the silent night and falling on the enemy at dawn ; of dealing, perhaps, a crushing blow ; of escaping, possibly, unscathed ; but, anyhow, of doing the very best that can be done, and, if need be, dying a splendidly honourable death for king and country.

Such an attack as this is always a dare-devil exploit. With only a fraction of an inch of steel between them and the water, those who work on board destroyers know that but a slight rent in the wall of their frail tenement may mean destruction and sudden death. But they go forth joyfully, and in this instance not to harry and cut down lesser craft, not under the escort of battleships and cruisers, but in a flotilla acting by itself, and acting against warships grouped under the guns of a formidable fortress. The British soldiers who flung themselves against the *chevaux de frise* of swords at Badajoz were faced by obstacles and risks not more terrible than those which these Japanese destroyers are fretting to encounter.

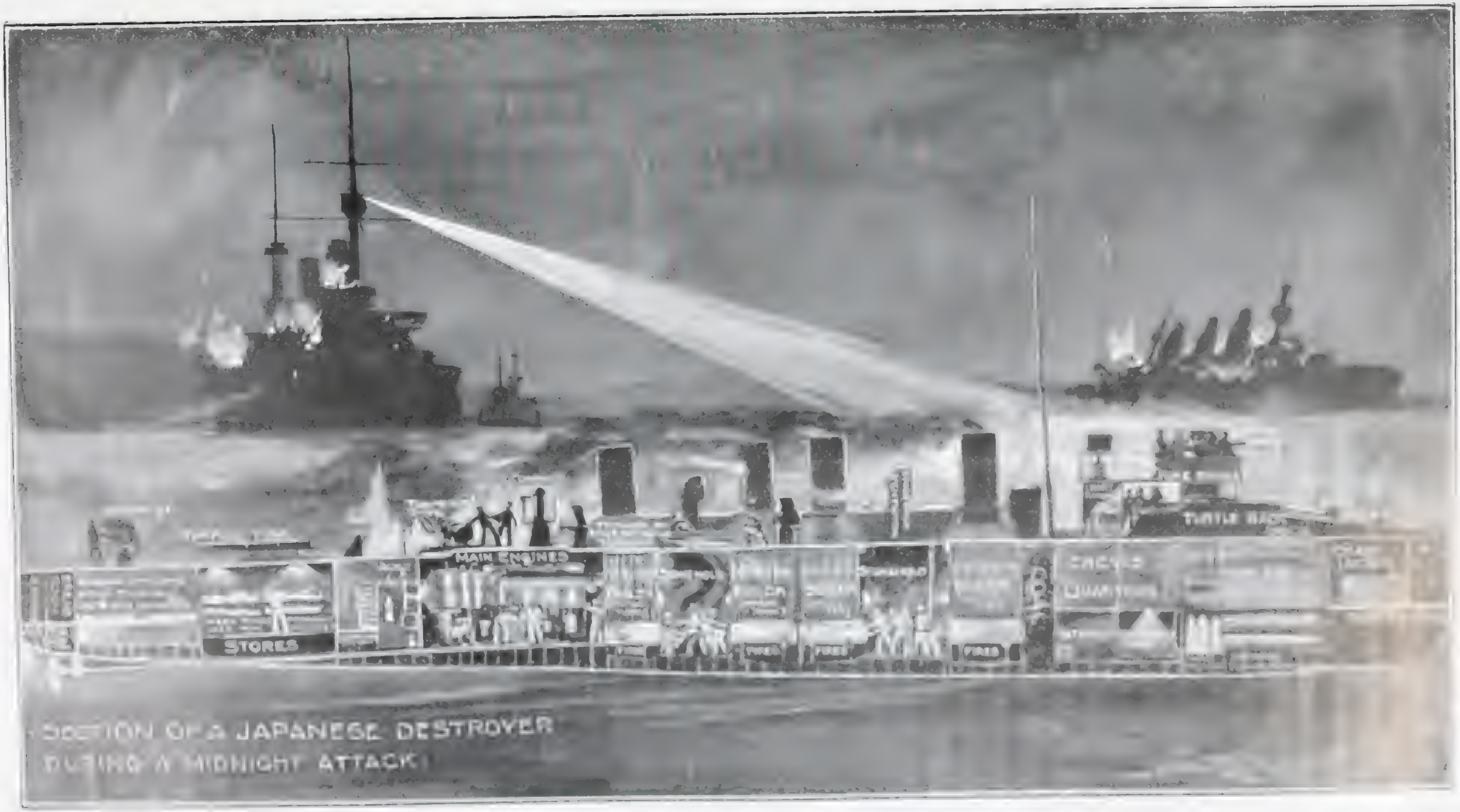
It is a dirty night. The air is bitterly cold, dark clouds are massing, and the snow is beginning to fall as these hounds of the ocean are slipped from their leashes, and race out into the darkness. The heartfelt good wishes of the Fleet go with them ; and Admiral Togo, resolute strong man as he is, must feel a spasm of anxiety as he learns that the flotilla has quickly vanished from view.

The snow thickens, and is driven by rising wind, which rapidly gathers strength and becomes a storm. The flotilla speeds on, at first in company, but cohesion soon becomes impossible. Gradually the destroyers separate, but there is no thought of slackening speed, much less of turning back. Full steam ahead ! On through the blinding snow, dark walls of water rising through which the sharp stems cleave their way, to the accompaniment of great heart-beats from the throbbing masses of machinery packed in the long, lean hulls. As if running into a friendly harbour to avoid a storm the gallant little ships race on, and the snow gathers in drifts on the narrow decks, and plays in frolic sport round the commanders conning with keen eyes the dreary waste of waters ahead, and wondering whether by mingled luck and judgment they will hit the mark in spite of this trying drawback.

On, through the cold night and the small hours of morning, the flotilla presses, but in sadly scattered formation, till finally all touch is completely lost, and all chance of united action gone. What more natural in such circumstances than that each destroyer should independently return to the base, having striven manfully to carry out a hopeless task, and surely not to be blamed for not proceeding further and alone on an apparently impossible quest ?

But the "Spirit of Old Japan" is aglow this early morning of February 14th, and its blaze and warmth, in two stout hearts at least, is more than sufficient to shrivel the falling snow, to lighten the gloom of that darkest hour which precedes the dawn, and to invigorate limbs chilled into torpor by the rigours of a bitter night.

At three o'clock in the morning the


MAIN ENGINES
STORES
CREW'S QUARTERS
TURTLE BACK
FIRES
FIRES
FIRES
FIRES

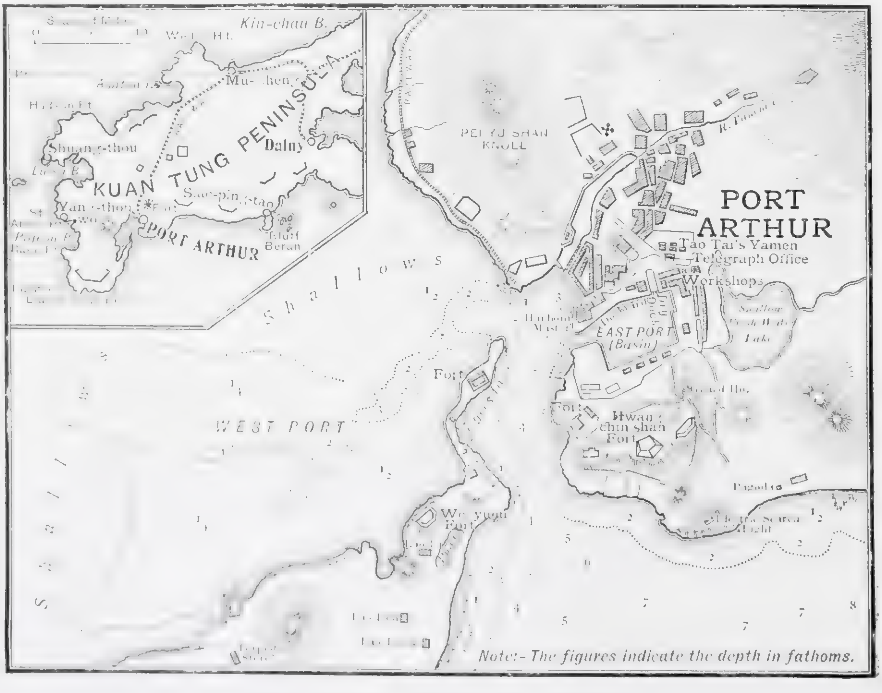
SECTION OF A JAPANESE DESTROYER DURING A MIDNIGHT ATTACK.

destroyer *Asagiri*, commanded by Captain Isakawa, appears at the entrance of Port Arthur, a puny visitor, indeed, to knock at the gate of that giant fortress, from the works of which three hundred guns point their grim muzzles at the sea, and in the waters lapping the feet of which there are still some of Russia's best and biggest ships lying.

The *Asagiri* may well be proud of the sensation created by her early morning call. As she stands in boldly, the beam of a searchlight falls upon her, for the Russians are this time vigilantly on the watch, mindful of the scathing abuse with which Admiral Alexeieff rewarded them for their negligence on the ever-to-be-remembered 8th. There are scouts patrolling the entrance to the harbour, and in the crossed beams which light up the approach it is impossible even for the low-lying *Asagiri* to shoot in unnoticed.

Discovery of the intruder is followed by a roar which is quite as complimentary, though hardly as pleasant, to the *Asagiri* as would be a royal salute. The forts open fire at once on the destroyer, and it seems that nothing but a miracle can save her. It may be the speed at which she is travelling, the inferior skill of the Russian gunners, the fear of hitting a Russian ship in the uncertain light—each or all of these reasons may help to preserve the splendid little vessel which now essays a feat that will live long in the naval annals not only of Japan, but of the world.

Like a pike the *Asagiri* at full steam darts past the scouts, past the batteries, into the narrow entrance of the harbour itself! She sees before her the huge hull


Kin-chau B.
Mu-chen
KUAN TUNG PENINSULA
Shuang-thou
Dalny
Sae-ping-tao
Yan-thou
PORT ARTHUR
Bluff
Beran
Shallows
PEI YU SHAN KNOLL
Railway
R.
PORT ARTHUR
Tao Tai's Yamen
Telegraph Office
Workshops
EAST PORT (Basin)
Harbour Mast
Shallow Fresh Water Lake
Fort
Hwan chin shan Fort
WEST PORT
Wei yuan Fort
Pagoda
Note:- The figures indicate the depth in fathoms.

PLAN OF PORT ARTHUR AND HARBOUR.

of a warship from whose funnel the smoke is ascending. She discharges a torpedo at this monster, and then swiftly turning, emerges, exchanging shots with the

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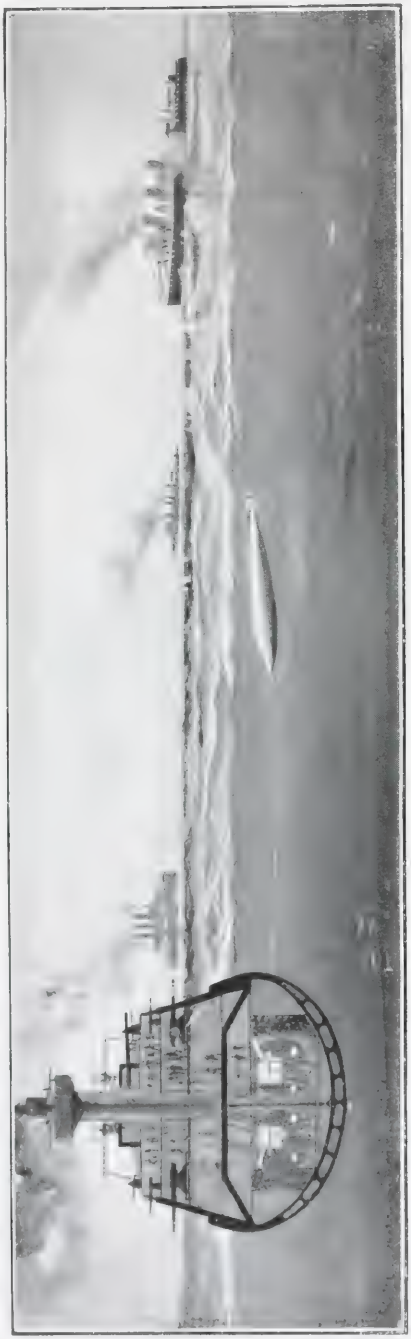
THE DISCHARGING OF A TORPEDO.

enemy's torpedo-boats, and, it is said, sending one of them to the bottom. Despite the rain of shot and shell she is still unharmed, and runs out to sea, proudly conscious of a brilliant deed, superbly done. Gallant little *Asagiri!* Wherever brave acts are honoured, wherever reckless heroism has its due, there shall be graven on the tablets of memory, in letters of gold, the glorious tale of your single-handed dash, after a night of storm and stress, into the very heart of a position deemed impregnable to the most furious attack.

Two hours after the *Asagiri's* arrival comes another visitor to pay respects to the Russian Viceroy of the Far East. Shrouded [illegible] the [illegible] commanded [illegible] swiftly out of the [illegible] day—it is [illegible] approaching the roadstead outside the harbour of Port Arthur. One can fancy the *Hayatori* having, perhaps, been driven a little out of her course, and straining every steel nerve to make up for the lost time, and so be enabled to do a little mischief before full daybreak renders her enterprise insanely foolish. She has "cut things fine," and very little time now remains before all her chances will be merged in the certainty of destruction to herself and crew. Even as it is, such a raid as that carried out by the *Asagiri* is out of the question. Port Arthur is alive with lights and sentinels and gunners at their posts. There is movement of shipping, [illegible] and



A TORPEDO, DISCHARGED FROM A DESTROYER, TRAVELLING BY ITS OWN ENGINES TOWARDS AN ARMOURED BATTLESHIP.

a rush at the harbour entrance would mean the concentration on the raider of enough shot to sink Admiral Togo's flagship, let alone a poor destroyer with a shell of paper-like thickness.

But the *Hayatori* is in greater luck than would seem to be her lot in these rather depressing circumstances. As she hurries along, seeking for some worthy object for her one serious means of doing damage, her commander espies two unmistakable Russian warships lying well in front of the harbour entrance. In an instant his resolution is taken. His bluejackets stand by the tube, and, as his craft darts past the huge shapes that loom in the near distance, the torpedo leaps from its receptacle and speeds on its deadly errand, that astonishing invention, the gyroscope, keeping it truly to its course. A moment of suspense follows, for, unless it has been correctly aimed, the torpedo will merely spend its energy in futile flight and be recovered later by the enemy. The *Hayatori* is at full steam, and cannot approach closer without the certainty of being crushed. But she hears the explosion, which can only have been caused by the torpedo coming into contact with the hull of the warship aimed at. Accordingly, she runs, well satisfied, out to sea, and later it is reported that the Russian cruiser *Boyarin* is the vessel which the *Hayatori* attacked in a fashion only surpassed in audacity by the earlier exploit of her pushing sister.

Trying times, these, for Port Arthur's garrison, and still more for the civilian inhabitants, who can hardly be expected to take a calm, professional view of such exciting episodes. But soon there are few civilian inhabitants left, for, with excellent forethought and considerable energy, Admiral Alexeieff proceeds to get rid of all "useless mouths" in anticipation of the siege which now seems inevitable. The station is crowded with refugees, many of them Chinamen, who have left behind them large stores of foodstuffs. The latter are promptly annexed by the authorities, wheat and milling machinery are brought into the town from outside, and the authorities begin to talk proudly of being able to "hold out," if necessary, for two years. It is said that about this time another exodus besides that of civilians takes place. Nearly every soldier that can be spared from garrison duty is wanted for the field army, and a good many naval gunners are at "a loose end" by reason of the disablement of their ships. Sailors and [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] at [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] by [illegible] at [illegible].

The Viceroy himself retires to Harbin, the great junction where the Manchurian Railway bifurcates to Vladivostok and Port Arthur; and while, morally, some disadvantage seems to attend this move, there is much to be said for it from the strategical standpoint. For Alexeieff will be far better able to do his Viceregal work at Harbin or Mukden than in a place where he may find himself [illegible] inconveniently situated. At Port Arthur, too, there is little to be done [illegible] nature. The Russian [illegible]

Photo: The Topical Press Photo Agency.

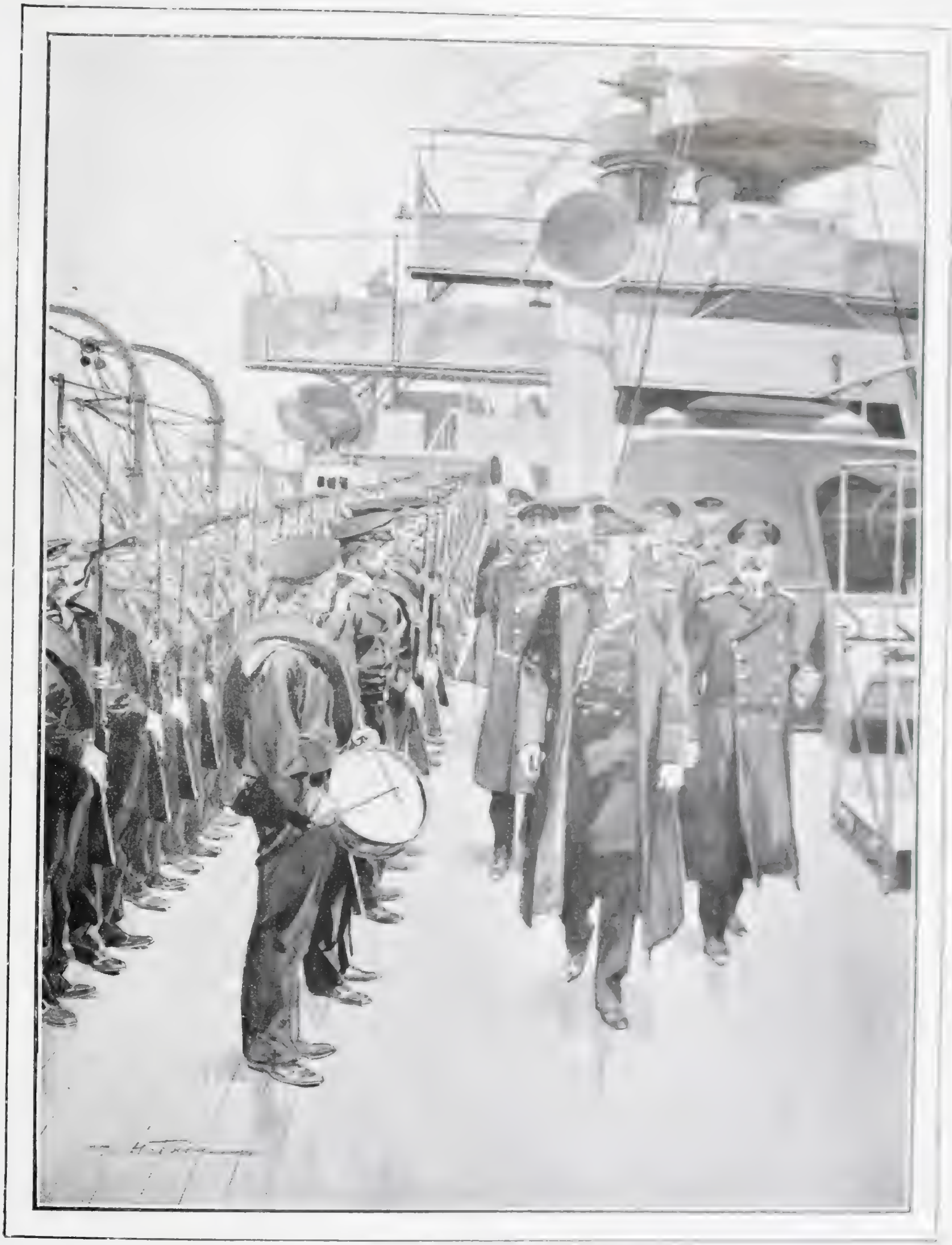
A RUSSIAN MILITARY FUNERAL.

said to be "in being," and, if the Japanese attempt a landing on the Liaou-tung Peninsula, it will not be by a handful of troops from Port Arthur that they will be successfully hindered. What looks, then, rather like a retreat on the Viceroy's part is really a very sensible measure promptly taken at what may prove a critical juncture.

THE JAPANESE ARMOURED CRUISER *NISSHIN.*

For about ten days following the visit of the *Asagiri* and *Hayatori* Port Arthur is watched by the Japanese fleet much as a mouse-hole is watched by a cat, but with a difference. For now and then the watchers in this case indicate their presence somewhat vigorously, although no actual attacks appear to have been delivered between February 14th and 24th. From Huang-Chin (Golden Hill), Port Arthur, the Japanese fleet can be descried at intervals, and the absence of arrivals by sea indicates pretty clearly that it has established what is at any rate an efficient temporary blockade. It is essential to understand that, while all this time Port Arthur has been kept under the closest surveillance by quite enough ships for the purpose, a squadron has been detached to attend to the Russian squadron which has its base at Vladivostok, and other warships have doubtless been employed in connection with the transport of troops destined to take part in land operations to be described hereafter.

These facts, if not very thrilling, are exceedingly instructive as showing the readiness and skill with which Japan at once began to take advantage of the command of the sea secured by her at the outset, although the actual number of vessels at her disposal was not large, considering the area of sea in question. Nor could she hope for some weeks to stiffen

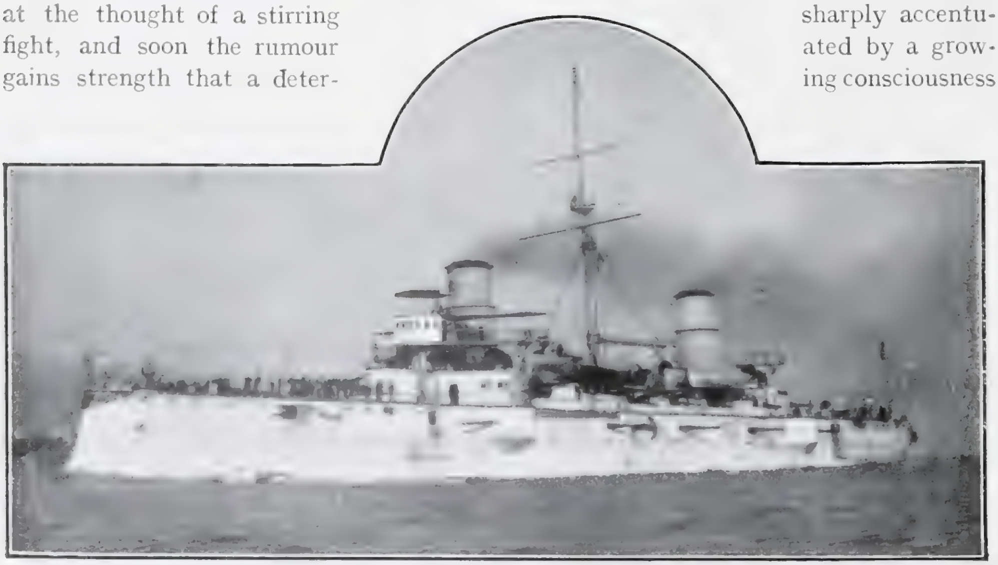


AN INSPECTION ON BOARD A RUSSIAN [illegible] her resources in this respect by the employment of the two powerful cruisers, the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, which she had bought at the end of 1903 from the Argentine Government, and which had recently made a rather sensational voyage from Europe, shadowed for several days by Russian warships. These vessels had arrived safely on February 15th, but some time would necessarily elapse before they could be sent to join one of the squadrons at sea.

Let us now revert to the state of affairs at Port Arthur, where for ten days the garrison has been, perhaps, rather impatiently awaiting some fresh development. It is dreary work this watching and being watched, more especially as a strict order has been issued that no lights are to be used, and evening consequently brings no sort of relief to the monotony of the day. On the early morning of February 24th, however, a sensation comes at last. Once more the guns are roaring, pulses are quickened at the thought of a stirring fight, and soon the rumour gains strength that a determined attack has been delivered, and that the Japanese have not only been repulsed, but have suffered serious loss!

There can be no mistake. There are sunken vessels to be seen with funnels clearly showing them to be Japanese warships, and it is known that after the "battle" Japanese torpedo-boats were seen flying out to sea. Great and glorious news! The Tsar is promptly informed of the "victory," and Europe is thrilled with the intelligence that four of Japan's "battleships" have been sunk in the Port Arthur roadstead, and that special praise in connection with the notable achievement is due to the *Retvisan*, one of the ships torpedoed on the 8th, and supposed to have been permanently disabled.

War has its cruel ironies, and this proves to have been one of them. Gradually the true story comes piecemeal over the wires, and Russia's almost furious joy at such an unexpected piece of good fortune is slowly merged into sickening disappointment, sharply accentuated by a growing consciousness



THE JAPANESE ARMOURED CRUISER *KASUGA*.

that a crafty enemy has again scored a point, although his object may not have been attained with complete success.

The story is a simple one, but at the back of it lies a solid mass of that same quality of daring courage which has already characterised the action of the Japanese torpedo-boats at midnight on the 8th, and that of the destroyers on the morning of the 14th. It is the story of the sinking of the *Merrimac* in the Spanish-American War told a little differently, and not a jot or tittle of the lavish praise showered upon Lieutenant Hobson and his comrades for their splendidly courageous exploit can be rightfully withheld from the plucky Japs who took part in this brilliant endeavour to "bottle up" the Russian ships lying in the harbour of Port Arthur. In passing, it may be urged that the latter attempt was in its conception far the more elaborate and scientific, and, if it had succeeded, would have given the Russians a great deal more trouble than they actually experienced.

The war correspondent suffers, as a rule, under the disadvantage of having to regard the episodes of a campaign from a continuously one-sided standpoint. The war historian is happily not so hampered, and the present writer makes no excuse for perpetually flitting from Russia to Japan and *vice versâ*, in order to attempt the most vivid presentment possible of any particular happening. In this instance he was but a moment ago in Port Arthur, but now, Ariel-like, he spans a good

[illegible]

many leagues of sea and calls his readers with him to witness the inception of a very interesting and curious enterprise on the part of the wide-awake Navy that flies the flag of the Rising Sun.

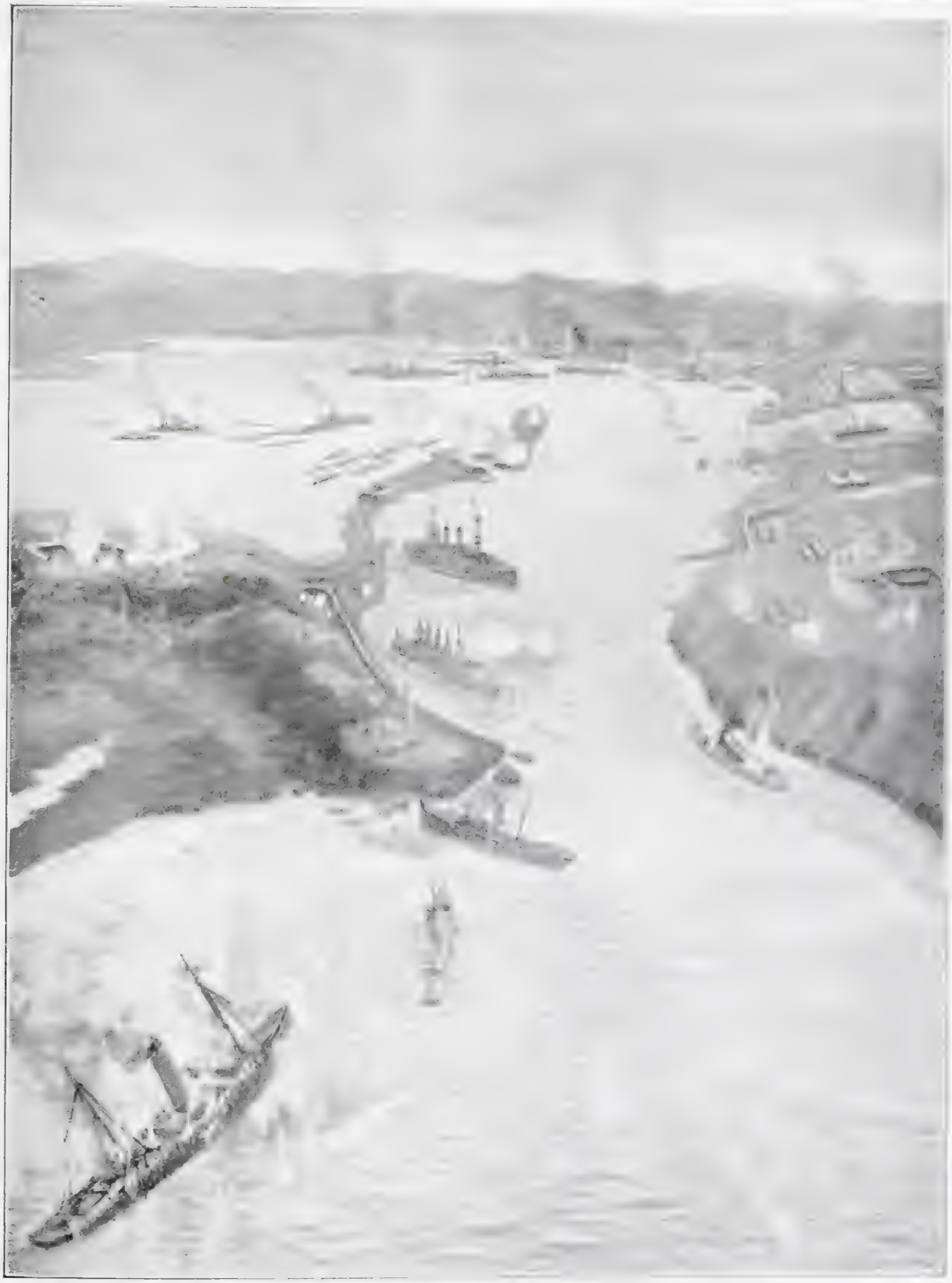
In the very early morning of February 24th Admiral Togo's torpedo flotilla—both destroyers and torpedo-boats this time—is heading with rather singular slowness for Port Arthur. Evidently the pace is being set by five accompanying vessels of some size, which at first sight resemble Japanese warships, but whose appearance, on closer inspection, proves altogether fraudulent. Something a little queer, too, about the very leisurely, not to say torpid, manner of their going, very different from the brisk, forceful progress of an up-to-date cruiser, with engines running sweetly, and hull slipping easily through the water at a comfortable eighteen knots, or a good deal more. There is a wheeziness and clangour about the machinery of these queer craft which alone betokens some strange departure from the ordinary run of things.

Examination shows that the five vessels which are thus waddling along in company with Japan's fastest destroyers are simply so many old merchantmen: the *Hokoku Maru, Bushu Maru, Tenshin Maru, Buyo Maru*, and *Jinsen Maru;* all of them little more than shells fitted with engines rapidly nearing the scrap-iron stage. Each has on board the merest outline of a crew, just enough to keep the cranky machinery going and the ship's head in the right direction. These officers and men, it is said, have been most carefully selected from a host of eager volunteers for a task in which the chances of escaping a more or less dreadful death are quite ethereal.

The cargoes carried by these five new additions to the navy of Japan are very suggestive. Chiefly stones, it would seem; but with this unprofitable freight is combined a quantity of kerosene and of explosives linked up by connecting wires to an electric battery. It is easy now to see what is the object which these devoted old tramps are designed to fulfil. They are intended to be sunk, if possible, at the entrance of Port Arthur harbour so as to block the narrow fairway, and it is expected, doubtless, that they will further serve the purpose of the "fire-ships," the daring use of which has led to many a stirring episode in our own naval annals. If, in the excitement consequent upon the arrival of this "squadron" in Russian waters, the destroyers and torpedo-boats get a chance of running in and leaving their mark upon one or another of the enemy's ships, so much the better. But the main business lies with the masquerading merchantmen, and the gallant fellows aboard them are the heroes of this early morning adventure.

To the left of the navigable channel which leads into the inner harbour of Port Arthur is a narrow spit of land, known as the Tiger's Tail, which is lined with forts, and has at its southern end a lighthouse, marking the opening of the navigable channel. Close to this lighthouse the Russian battleship *Retvisan* ran aground on the morning of February 9th, after having been torpedoed a few hours before. She appears to have been still in this undignified position on the morning of the 24th, unable to move, but performing, and with vigilance and efficiency, the duties of a guardship.

The pseudo-warships, with their attendant destroyers and torpedo-boats, have come fairly close to the light-house before they are discovered, and no time



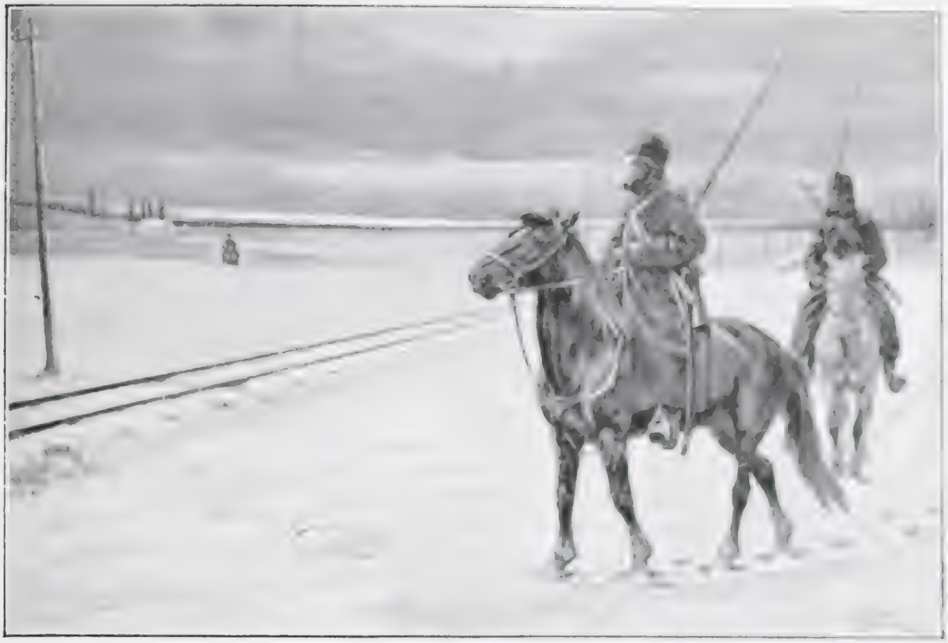
THE JAPANESE ATTEMPT TO SEAL UP PORT ARTHUR: [illegible] is wasted over their reception. The *Retvisan* in particular is soon awakened to the fact that two of the ships are bearing down upon her, and her big guns bellow out an immediate welcome. The powerful fort on Golden Hill, on the opposite side of the channel, joins in with the other advanced works, and for half an hour or so the fun must have been fast and furious indeed, although so curiously one-sided. One can imagine the joy with which the gunners on the *Retvisan*, in particular, saw ship after ship of the attacking "fleet" staggering under their heavy fire, then running aimlessly towards the shore, and finally blowing up and sinking helplessly. But there must have been many who, even in the excitement of the moment, must have regarded the silence of the attackers as rather remarkable, and have realised that here were no genuine representatives of Japan's heavier fighting ships. Still, in such an uncertain light, with guns roaring on all sides and unmistakable destroyers and torpedo-boats in hostile evidence, it may well be imagined that a general impression of a great victory now prevailed, and that for some hours Port Arthur laboured under the glittering delusion that a terrible and crushing blow had been dealt against a too audacious enemy.

OPERATING THE SEARCHLIGHT.

Whilst these hopes and fears and disappointments are being engendered in the heart of the defence, the Japanese destroyers and torpedo-boats are speeding out to sea, having, it is said, picked up all, or nearly all, the officers and men who so gallantly stoked and steered the merchantmen into the roadstead.

Morning shows that the object of this brisk attempt has not been successfully accomplished. All the five ships have blown up and sunk, but not in such a manner as to close the harbour entrance, even to the cruisers lying inside. But there can be little question as to the moral effect of an experiment so full of craft and daring.

At one o'clock in the morning of the 25th the Japanese destroyer flotilla makes a scouting attack on Port Arthur, Dalny, and Pigeon Bay, the ships having set sails to disguise their true character. That trusty watch-dog, the *Retvisan*, is again on the alert, and with the shore batteries opens such a fire that the destroyers perforce retire. Later in the morning the Japanese fleet appears in force, and subjects Port Arthur to two separate bombardments, eventually causing a violent outbreak of fire in the inner harbour.



ON THE [illegible] LINE. GUARDING THE RAILWAY NEAR IRKUTSK.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY—CHAOS AT LAKE BAIKAL—THE RUSSIAN SOLDIER—RED-BEARDED BRIGANDS—THE BRIDGE WATCHERS.

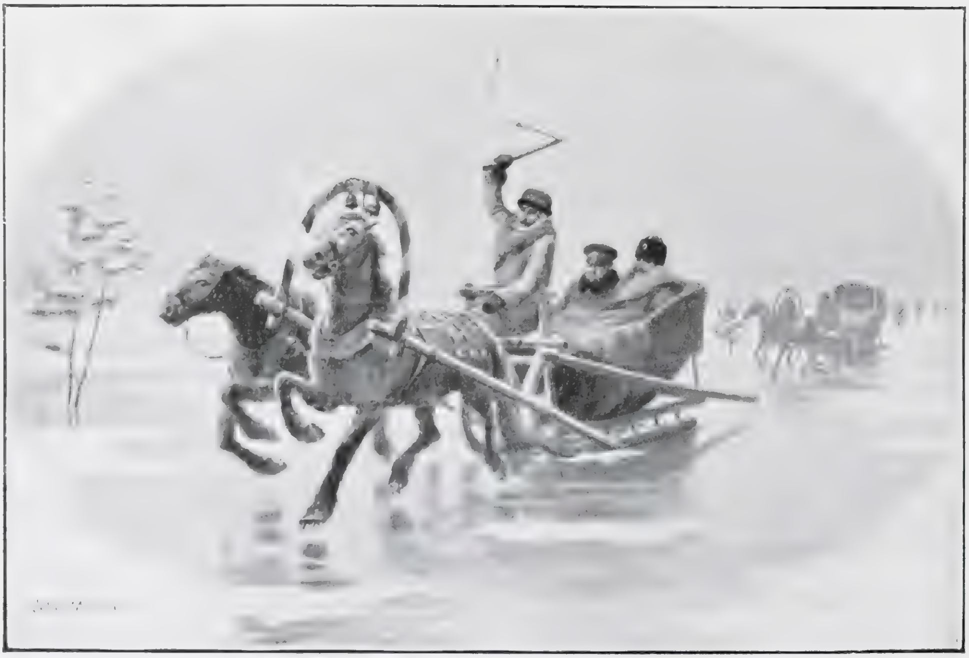
IT is intensely cold, and the bleak dreariness of the surrounding landscape brings into stronger relief the sense of hardship and desolation. To our rear runs a single track of rail forty miles to Irkutsk, the capital of East Siberia; in front lies Lake Baikal, the sixth largest lake in the world, now a great crescent of ice nearly four hundred miles from horn to horn, and at this point about thirty miles broad. Here, after a journey of four thousand miles from Moscow, the ordinary peace-time traveller by the Great Siberian Railway finds his journey checked, pending the completion of the circuitous line round the southern side of the lake, upon which the engineers were busily engaged when war broke out with Japan. In summer the journey is continued across the lake by steamer; in winter either a channel is forced by an ice-breaker or the voyager can hurry across in a sledge.

It may be imagined that the bridging of a railway route in this fashion by a great intervening sheet of water about as broad as the narrower parts of the English Channel is rendered twentyfold more harassing and complicated by the existence of a state of war. A glance at the scene before us shows us what a colossal problem has been set for accomplishment even by able, cool-headed, masterly men.

accustomed to evolving order out of chaos, and backed up by willing subordinates of conspicuous zeal and integrity—conditions which, alas ! are hardly present here. In a word, the confusion and congestion are frightful, and the wonder is that the work of hurrying reinforcements to the front does not stop dead by reason of this appalling block, which Nature is doing her wintry best to render absolutely hopeless.

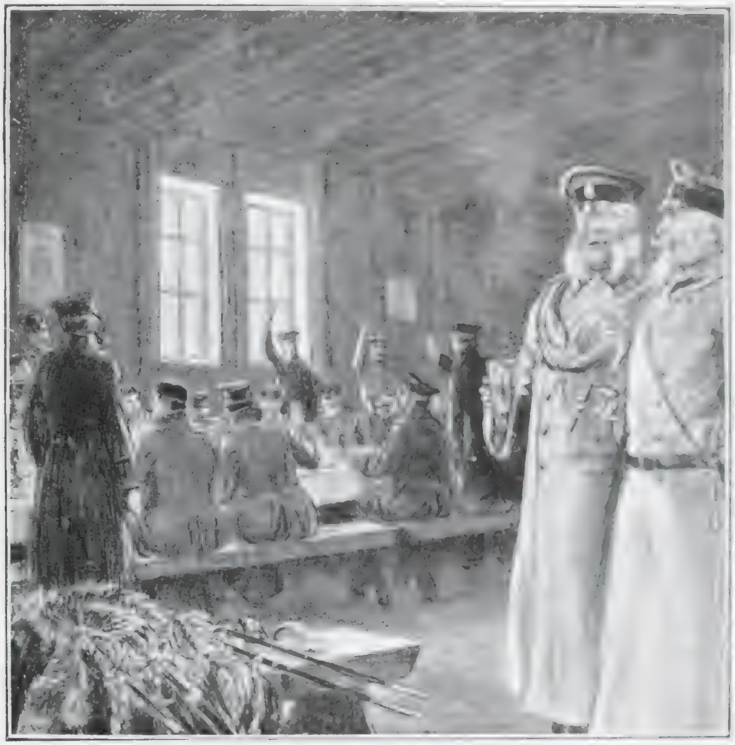
Lake Baikal is covered with three or four feet of ice, and raging snowstorms have produced great drifts of snow. There are three tracks now running across the lake—one, the sledge route marked by poles ; another, a foot-track, over which we see a battalion of infantry disappearing into the hazy white distance ; and, lastly, a temporary railway line which runs over sleepers laid more or less carefully on the ice. This last track has been rushed forward with all speed, and already at least one ghastly accident has taken place. As a locomotive was running a few days ago at a short distance from the shore, the ice suddenly cracked, an awful fissure was disclosed, and the heavy engine utterly disappeared. Small wonder, then, that the authorities are for the present using this ice railway solely for the conveyance of stores, the troops having to make the crossing either in sledges or on foot.

The surface of the ice on Lake Baikal is very irregular and uneven, with crevasses and fissures, several feet wide in places, and hummocks which nearly jar even the solitary traveller out of his sledge. The effect of these last obstructions upon sledges built for carrying three, into which five or six unfortunate soldiers



OFFICERS CROSSING LAKE BAIKAL.

have been packed, cannot but render the latter thankful at times to leave their precarious seats and tramp along by the side of their vehicles. Half-way across the frozen lake a great rest-house of wood and felt and brick is built every winter for the accommodation of travellers, and here hot soup and coffee can be obtained by those of sufficient means and leisure. But the great bulk of those who are now hurrying " to the front " have no chance of availing themselves of this comparatively luxurious opportunity. For the soldiers rough shelters have been constructed, under which they can partake of a hurried meal, and, if frostbitten, obtain attention from the military doctors.



THE "HALF-WAY" HOUSE ON LAKE BAIKAL.

Even the [illegible] of a [illegible] [illegible] the lake are managed [illegible] [illegible] us [illegible] the terrible [illegible] at Baikal station. The present railway cannot carry forward more than a portion of the great piles of stores, ammunition and other war material which the freight trains bring in daily from Irkutsk; and on the shores of the lake there are mountains of [illegible], pyramids of bales containing articles and provisions of which the troops already in Manchuria [illegible] need. Russian officialdom is not [illegible] at its best in such circumstances as these, and the absence of all grip of the situation becomes daily more deplorable.

A pathetic feature of the situation on

the shores of Lake Baikal is the arrival of refugees, mainly women and children, from the Far East, more especially from the terminal fortresses of Port Arthur and Vladivostok. Some very striking accounts have been given of the sights and scenes occasioned by the hurried flight of these fragile creatures from their homes—a flight accelerated by the stern demands of the authorities, who knew well that the commissariat problem before them would not admit of any consideration for weaklings unable to render any sort of useful service. The families of naval and military men were packed literally by hundreds into the trains running westward, the poor soldiers' wives with their infants and children being crowded into the common carriages used for transporting troops. It is said that the first two trains which were hurried out of Port Arthur on February 9th, after the Japanese torpedo attack, carried two thousand souls, whose sufferings on the terrible journey are better imagined than described. "No lavatories, no food to be got along the line," writes the special correspondent of the *Standard*, "hardly any water, no milk, and six hundred children of all ages huddling together for warmth, and crying with misery and hunger. It is one of the pitiful sights of warfare, and a mere forerunner to the woes behind." The story of the crossing of Lake Baikal by this pitiful freight of weak and almost helpless humanity is too harrowing to be reproduced in detail. It is sadly sufficient to say that several infants, overwrapped through fear of the terrible cold of the sledge journey, were found dead at the end of the five hours' gallop across the ice. Influenza broke out on the train, and it must have been with a strange mixture of relief and dull despair that the unfortunate mothers, sick, nerve-shattered, and spiritless, arrived at Moscow to tell the tale of the sudden awakening of the Far East to the horrors of actual war, and of their own forced flight across thousands upon thousands of miles of dreary, snow-swept plain and ice-bound steppe.

And what of the troops? Here the picture seems a rather brighter one, although painful tales are told of sickness, cold, and privation. There is danger, too, in the long weary journey, liable to sudden and, indeed, tragic interruption by deep snowdrifts through which not even the specially constructed locomotives can force their way. A short time back a troop-train nearing Baikal station was thrown from the rails, one soldier was killed, and about a score variously injured.

The four thousand miles from Moscow to Lake Baikal have been traversed by the troops in special trains carrying about 500 officers and men with their baggage, in the case of infantry; a smaller number, of course, in that of cavalry and artillery. Only the officers are accommodated in passenger cars. The men are packed by thirties into covered freight-vans, the sides of which are overlaid with felt, each van being further provided with a small stove. The atmosphere in such conditions should be densely warm enough, but, with the thermometer registering 50 degrees of frost, many cases of frost-bite occur, and, if all tales are to be believed, not a few grim fatalities. The clothing served out at Moscow has been hardly adequate to withstand such Arctic severity of cold as this, through a journey to be measured by weeks, not days. For it is computed that no soldier is now reaching Irkutsk in less than a fortnight after leaving Moscow. Arrived at Lake Baikal, he

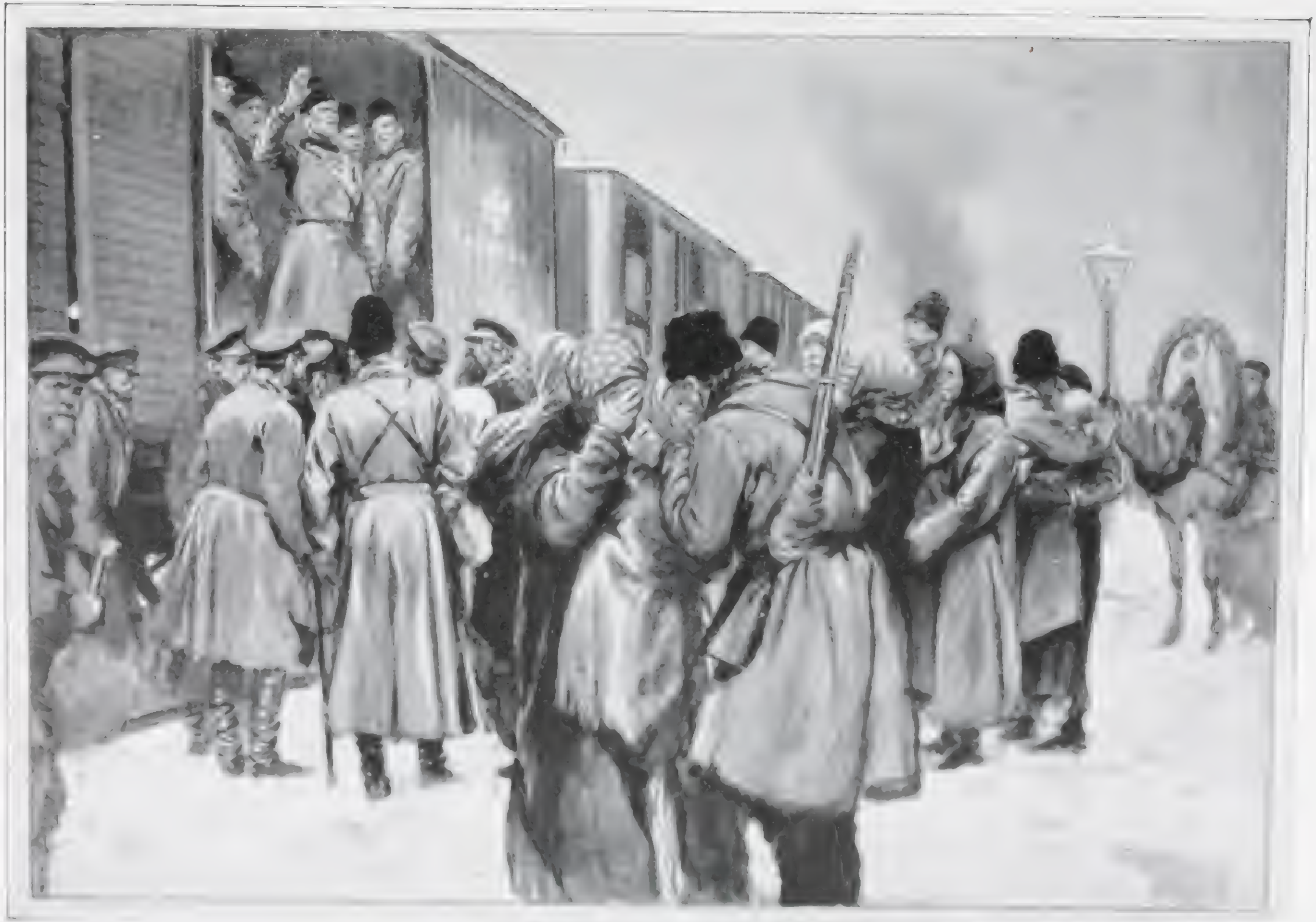


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Photo: Mr. J. Foster Fraser.

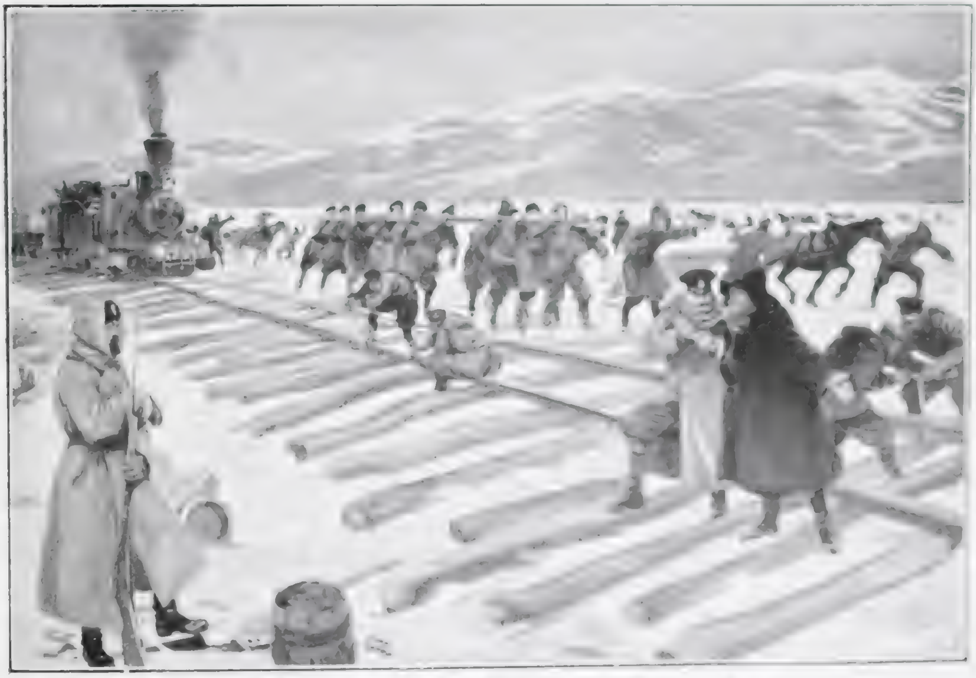
THE GREAT ENGLISH-BUILT ICE-BREAKER *BAIKAL*, IN SUMMER.

may have to cross that cheerless expanse of ice on foot, and there is still fourteen hundred miles—or, as the traffic now is, some six days to Harbin—the junction where the railway branches off southwards to Port Arthur and continues nearly due east to Vladivostok.

Yet, with all these cruel drawbacks to comfort, the Russian soldier, even on the shores of Lake Baikal, presents a cheery spectacle. He left Moscow in a glow of patriotism which has not left him yet; he is still the Tsar's "brother," and his own officer's "little pigeon"; and he is still, with all his ignorance, his rude ideas of civilisation, and his Tartar proclivities, one of the brightest, most docile, and most enduring fighting-men in the world. He suffers—who but a Polar bear would not suffer?—from the bitter rigours to which he is being exposed, but he is grateful for the permission, or rather orders, given him to disembark at intervals from the weary train, and shovel snow by way of restoring life to his numbed limbs. He is being miserably fed, but there is nothing remarkable in that, and a hunk of black bread and occasional portions of a thick mess of meat soup "keep him going," where many more refined soldier-men would break down. With all his troubles, too, the hardy Russ soldier is no morose grumbler, but a lively fellow, full of rough jests, and fond of anything in the way of a song or dance. Many a lively caper he cuts in the snow, and, later, when he trudges across the frozen lake, we shall hear him either singing himself, or tramping lustily in time with the vigorous chanting of some recognised regimental songster.

Apart from this racial light-heartedness, the strong strain of religious feeling in the Russian soldiery imparts a special significance to such a scene as the one which an attempt is being made to realise here. The Russian regiment ordered to the front attends a service, at which every effort is made by the priests to inspire both officers and men with the belief that their cause is a just, and therefore Divinely favoured one. Frequently the men are sprinkled with holy water, which many of them believe will afford them special protection from the bullets of the enemy. Thus warmly clothed with comforting beliefs, and supported by a bright and patient temperament, the Russian soldier draws round him his military greatcoat—a really excellent and serviceable garment—and makes light of early experiences in a campaign which, in any case, is not likely to bring him personally much additional hardship or discouragement.

A distinction, however, must be drawn between the three classes of Russian fighting-man who are being carried to the front by the Siberian Railway. First, there are the average serving soldiers of the Regular Army, duly uniformed and accoutred, knowing their business and minding it in a spirit of mingled acquiescence and indifference; secondly, the new levies, "happy, eager, careless boys, reckless and merry," laughing at the pretty faces to be seen at the windows of the trains carrying refugees, "passing compliments and blowing kisses, without a thought of the morrow." Another class is made up of reservists, men of forty, "strong-bearded fathers of families, masters of small holdings, respectable citizens, torn from counter and counting-



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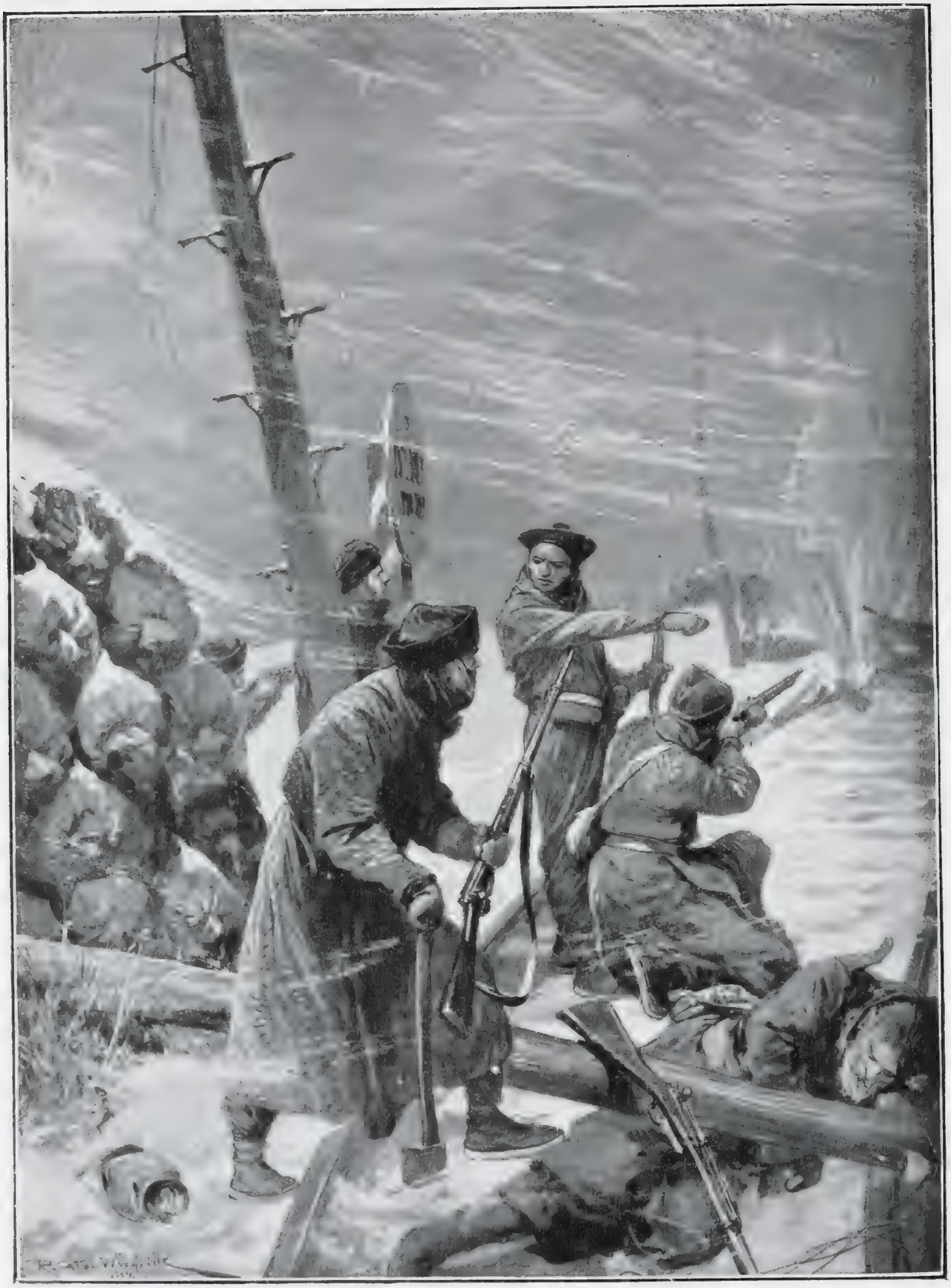


ATTACK ON THE RAILWAY BY CHUNCHUSES.

house, from field and byre, their wives and families left to starve, and their business, built up with care and caution, left to ruin—terrible fighters these, and most miserable of men." The net which Holy Russia casts when she calls her legions to war is a vast one, and its meshes are small. Although but a portion of her immense military forces have been mobilised to reinforce the Army in the Far East, the process has searched the remotest corners of the Empire, and well-nigh every shade of character and calling is represented in the moving mass of soldierdom which is restlessly passing eastward to fight the battles of the Great White Tsar.

Hitherto we have been, since the commencement of this chapter, sojourning in Siberia. Let us now step forward some hundreds of miles, and touch the "gossamer thread" of railway at a point somewhere in the great eastern province of Manchuria. Here we come into contact with another feature of Russian military organisation in the Far East—namely, the Manchurian Railway Guards. These have a trying and dangerous duty to perform, for here the Russians have other difficulties to contend with besides the frank hostility of Japan and the covert unfriendliness of China.

In immemorial times, when the Chinese first settled in Manchuria, many of them were not peaceful immigrants, but nomad desperadoes of the worst description, outlaws and criminals whose one hope of life consisted in desultory brigandage. Combining with the more evil elements of the Manchu population, these wastrels gradually grew in strength and influence, swelling at last into a great league which called itself the "Hunhuze," or Redbeards, a name afterwards corrupted by the Russians into Chunchuses. The audacity, and power of [illegible] increased apace, and th[illegible] motto, "Vengeance, [illegible] the whole countryside. [illegible] they set up a sort of [illegible] for the purpose of extorting blackmail from merchants desiring to carry their wares into the interior. Woe betide the wretched trader in Manchuria whose cart did not fly the flag which he had bought at this "insurance office" as a symbol of payment of the Redbeards' dues.

When the Russians commenced to build the Manchurian portion of the great railway to the Far East, they found the Chunchuses' "[illegible]" to deal with. By dint of constant vigilance and their almost illimitable resources, they were enabled in ordinary times to reduce the plague of brigandage to moderate proportions, as far as the traffic by railway was concerned. But in the early days of construction many a station was pillaged, many a Russian soldier killed, by raiding Chunchuses mounted on horses famed for fleetness and endurance. It was not to be expected that the outbreak of war between Russia and Japan would result in any inaction on the part of these turbulent spirits. Whether, as is suggested, at the instigation of Japanese officers who were able to impart organisation and cohesion to the wandering bands, or [illegible] through sheer eagerness to profit by the pre-occupation of Russia, and by the passage of constant trains [illegible] valuable stores, the Chunchu[illegible] war broke out, have become far bolder and more troublesome, and [illegible] counters have taken pla[illegible] and the "details guarding the li[illegible]"

It is a grave [illegible] authorities that at a[illegible] may the work of reinforcement [illegible]

Photo: Topical Press Photo Agency.

CHINESE COOLIES AT WORK ON THE SUNGARI BRIDGE.

impeded, but the actual military operations hampered, by the presence of these formidable brigands, who, by some means, have become possessed of modern rifles, and are especially active in the region lying between Mukden and Niuchwang. In one instance a band of Chunchuses 500 strong is said to have attacked a Russian post to the west of Haicheng, and, although eventually repulsed with severe loss, is reported to have killed or wounded a score of Russians. But the main danger is, of course, to the line of railway, and there are hints that the Russians are beginning to hold out the olive-branch to these tormentors, instead of treating them, as hitherto, with relentless severity.

Yet another illustration may be given of the variegated yet constant risk to which Russia's line of communication with the Far East is being subjected, even at this early period of the war.

In its setting the scene is not very different from that in which we have just parted with the red-bearded brigands at their work of raiding the stations and the freight-trains on the line. But at this point the railway crosses the big Sungari River, close to Harbin, by an imposing bridge, the safety of which is of far more importance to Russia than that of scores of versts of the ordinary plain-running track. For the destruction of a few miles of rail out of several thousands is, comparatively speaking, a mere inconvenience, from a military standpoint, provided no natural obstacle, such as a river or lake, is concerned. But the wrecking of a bridge, even where there are British Royal

Engineers to repair it, is a bad business, and especially so when there is only one route available and time presses. The Sungari bridge is therefore watched night and day, and well it may be, for there are crafty foes at work who, on the chance of damaging the enemy's communications, will gladly face the inevitable doom of those caught playing this deadly game.

The Cossacks who are acting as sentinels over this threatened link of the chain are typical of a class of soldier which has no counterpart in any other European Army. They are not, perhaps, all they were, these far-ranging, free-foraging dare-devils, whose reputation for courage, horsemanship, and endurance is such a singularly live tradition of the Russian Army. In some western districts they are beating their swords into ploughshares, and as soldiers, generally speaking, they are under stricter rules of training and discipline than in the old days. Then the Cossack of the Don, with [illegible] was more picturesque than uniform, with a scraggy but serviceable mount, and a [illegible] dangling from his saddle-bow, constituted a sort of [illegible] of irregular cavalry. But change and progress notwithstanding, the Cossacks still constitute one of Russia's [illegible] military strength, especially in a country where present supplies are scanty and future supplies problematical. Inured to every sort of hardship, accustomed to fend for themselves not over scrupulously when the commissariat is at fault, keen-eyed and mounted on animals almost part of themselves, these Cossack watchers over the safety of the Sungari bridge could hardly be surpassed in their performance of an exhausting and anxious task.

[illegible]

THE BRIDGE ACROSS THE SUNGARI RIVER.

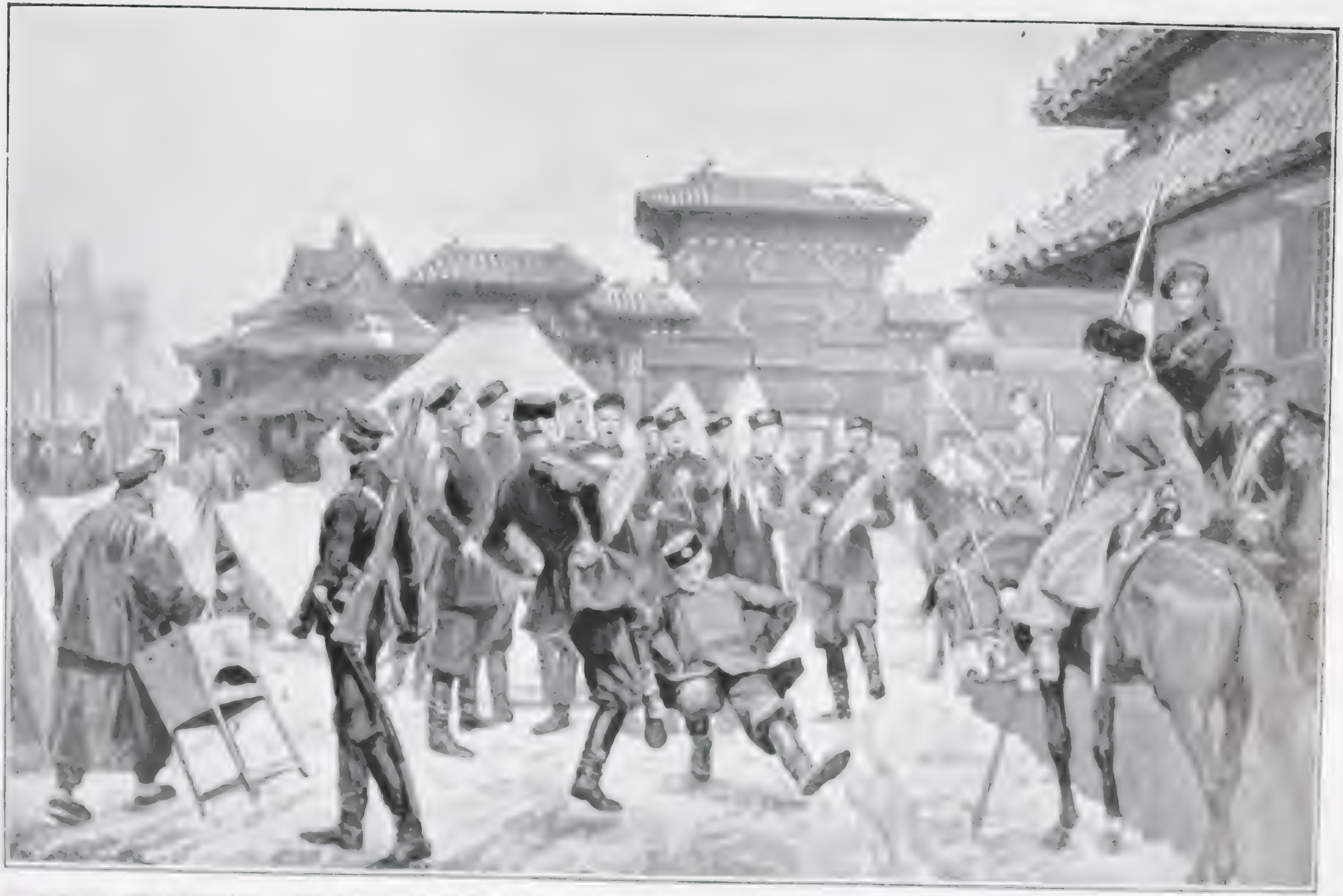
The driving snow renders the work of a guard at this point doubly difficult; but Russia has no lack of men, and the sentries are thickly posted, the patrols numerous. As one of the latter scours the neighbourhood of the bridge it comes upon a little group, apparently of Chinese coolies employed on the line, or in connection with the great workshops and wharves which line the Sungari River in the neighbourhood of Harbin, that great junction which in six years has become one of the most important centres in the Far East. A few weeks ago little notice beyond a rough, good-natured jest would have been given to the three undersized and, perhaps, not over-clean specimens of cold humanity upon whom the patrol suddenly descends. But the times have changed, and ordinary alertness has developed into very suspicious vigilance. The "coolies" are stopped and searched, and, either on them or in damning proximity, are found explosives evidently intended for the wrecking of the bridge!

In such cases military law, or rather that martial law which, as the Duke of Wellington said, is "no law at all," moves with terrifying rapidity. The would-be bridge-wreckers are hurried back to the nearest post and examined by an officer, the inquiry revealing, to the latter's satisfaction at any rate, the fact that here are no Chinese coolies, but holders of commissions in the Mikado's service. The names as subsequently published are not recognised by the Japanese authorities, but it is quite conceivable that, assuming they were really officers, the captives, though they may have admitted their rank and station, were careful to conceal their names.

The Russian account is that the three officers were immediately brought before a court-martial, condemned to death, and hanged, within twenty-four hours of their arrest, on the culverts of the bridge which they had intended to destroy. Native reports add that a further terrible vengeance was taken by the troops on a village near the Sungari River supposed to have harboured or encouraged the bridge-wreckers. The troops are said to have burned the village to the ground and to have massacred the inhabitants, including even the women—but statements of this kind are not to be accepted without substantial proof of their truth.

In the matter of the fate of the bridge-wreckers themselves sympathy is superfluous. Although in every case the detected spy in modern war is not necessarily put to death, there is practically no hope—nor, in the opinion of most, should there be—for the man caught red-handed in the act of wrecking or trying to wreck a railway bridge. For the damage done in nine cases out of ten means not only the interruption of an enemy's communications, but an almost certain sequel in the shape of an accident involving frightful loss of lives, very often of non-combatants. The deed itself may savour of heroism, it unquestionably is the mark of fanatical courage, but it is a murderous business, and it is not surprising if the punishment meted out to murder follows even a foiled attempt in a direction in which humanity of purpose counts so little.

This note of the difficulties and dangers besetting the line upon which Russia has to depend for the maintenance and reinforcement of her Army in the Far East would be incomplete without some allusion to a sensational incident much "nearer home" than is the Sungari River. The story, as telegraphed by Reuter, goes



[illegible] GERMAN MARINES [illegible] IN A [illegible] that near Syzran station on the Siberian Railway three Japanese, disguised as nuns, were arrested by the gensdarmes and railway guards for an attempt to blow up the great railway bridge over the Volga by means of mines placed underneath the bridge. The attempt failed, since the mines were carried away by the current, and exploded harmlessly at some distance down stream. It is easy to understand that such a daring endeavour as this, even if unsuccessful, would have the serious moral effect of producing considerable nervousness among the public, and possibly to some extent among the soldiery also. Prompt and vigorous measures followed this later discovery, the whole Siberian Railway was placed by an Imperial Ukase under martial law, and the guards along the line were considerably strengthened. Henceforth a sentry was posted at every third telegraph pole for many hundreds of miles of the journey. Here is a precaution probably unexampled in the annals of war, and one which only a military power with extraordinary resources could afford to take, even where such vital interests are involved as in the case of the wonderful railway which links Europe with the Far East, and, with all its weaknesses, is perhaps the most impressive example in existence of combined commercial and strategical design.

OFF TO THE FRONT! A COMMON SIGHT IN ST. PETERSBURG.

Photo: Mr. J. Foster Fraser.

THE CITY OF TOMSK.

CHAPTER VII.

SUPERSTITIOUS RUSSIA—AN ALTERED SITUATION—TRANSPORT AND HOW TO KEEP IT—KUROPATKIN—RUSSIA REINFORCING.

LET us try for a moment to picture ourselves in some remote Russian village, where the peasants are discussing, with a queer mixture of indefinable alarm, boastful confidence, and superstitious piety, such garbled news as has reached them concerning the progress of affairs in the Far East. Their talk may seem childish in comparison with the generally shrewd, if often strongly prejudiced, observations of the British village politician upon any matter of current national interest. But it is impossible not to be impressed with the simple fervour which animates these rude scratchers of the soil in giving expression to the hopes and fears that surround the present doings more especially of the Russian Army in its operations against the hated "yellowskins." Military service in Russia penetrates every section of social life to an extent, perhaps, even more marked in some respects than is the case in Germany and France. Many and various are its traditions, and [illegible] the Russian Army the living head and front is, of course, to peasant and villager alike, the Tsar. But the military ideal of the people is enshrined in a dead man, a leader who, after a career of extraordinary brilliance, [illegible]

—mysteriously as some think—in ignoble circumstances which it is needless to recall. It will be many a long year before another soldier comes to storm the hearts of the Russian peasantry with such thoroughness as did the "White General," Skobeleff, the hero of Plevna, and of a score of thrilling battle incidents.

In the Russian village where we are temporarily and imaginatively sojourning, there is a quaint belief concerning Skobeleff, which has a special reference to the war with Japan. The legend is that Skobeleff is not dead, but has been for years detained in prison, because he angered the Tsar by repeated requests to be allowed to make war, first against Germany, then against England, and finally against Turkey. "You shall remain in prison," said the Tsar, "until you can speak Japanese, and you shall not speak Japanese until the time comes when I shall make war with Japan." From this childlike story to the conviction that now, in due course, the "White General" has been released, and will shortly take his place at the head of a conquering Russian Army, is an easy step, and those make a great mistake who underrate the significance of such beliefs among a populace by nature prone to superstition, but also possessing qualities of courage and endurance with which superstition is not always allied.

From our Russian village let us now take a great leap eastward to Tomsk, the semi-civilised, semi-primitive capital of Western Siberia. Here we find streets thronged with villagers who—to quote the words of the *Daily Chronicle*, which specially reported the circumstance—are in an intense state of religious excitement. Many of them are actually begging to be helped on their way to Moscow, where they propose to offer up special prayers for the success of the Russian troops. For they declare that they have seen in the heavens a blood-red hand, gripping the cross-shaped hilt of a sword. This they believe to be the hand of the Bringer of Victory, St. George, and their enthusiasm has been further stirred by the priest, Athanasius, who has predicted that, in three months' time, St. George himself will appear on a flaming horse and gallop across Siberia to the sea. The affrighted soldiers of Japan, adds the priestly prophet, will thereupon fall an easy prey to the Russian troops, the Sea of Japan will dry up as did the Red Sea for the passage of the Israelites, and the Army of the Tsar will walk dry-foot and victorious to Tokio!

It is easy to say that the record of such amazing superstitions has a purely trivial interest. But those who read history by the light of national character will be inclined to attach considerable importance to such manifestations of popular thought and feeling at a time of national trial—manifestations which come somewhere between the sturdy Englishman's exhibition of personal doggedness in defeat, and the former tendency of another brave nation to cry "*Nous sommes trahis!*" when unexpected disaster fell upon its arms.

But whatever significance we choose to apply to these and other indications—some of them, it is true, very different in character—of the manner in which the actualities of the war with Japan were construed by the Russian lower classes, we should do wrong not to make some effort to understand the new position in Russia created by the early Japanese successes, and the means which were adopted to cope with the altered condition of affairs.

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In a previous chapter (Chapter III.) an attempt has been made to illustrate very briefly the extraordinary preparedness of Japan both by land and sea for this great conflict. We have seen the Japanese fleet striking blow after blow upon an enemy apparently incapable of effective retaliation; we have noted the commencement of Japanese land operations, and have recorded a disembarkation of troops on a system which worked with clocklike precision; while on the Russian military side we have heard little beyond the news of Admiral Alexeieff's withdrawal from Port Arthur to Harbin, the preparations for standing a siege of the former, and the difficulties of reinforcement by means of the Siberian Railway. Here, it may have seemed to some, was a nearly complete contrast between absolute readiness and smoothness of action on the one hand, and, on the other, unfitness, immobility, and utter failure to grasp the realities of a serious situation.

But we must not be over-hasty in generalising from such comparisons. Russia has been taken by surprise, it is true; she has suffered well-nigh irreparable loss, and she has much to do before she can again claim local equality with a foe whom the Tsar has publicly proclaimed to be "brave, crafty, and confident." But Russia, temporarily startled and confused by the vigour of the first blows dealt by Japan, is not necessarily a Russia which cannot recover herself, at any rate on land. From the villagers fondly hoping that she will be enabled to do so by the intervention of St. George or Skobeleff, we must now, in common fairness, turn to those higher official quarters in which responsibility for retrieving Russia's losses rests. It may be that the result will be both interesting and inspiring. For while the spectacle of a great nation taking the field in perfect condition for a "fight to a finish" may be of surpassing attractiveness, there is something fascinating, too, in the efforts of a world-Power, which for the moment has suffered a tremendous shock to its prestige, to right itself and regain its former ascendency.

Just as in the "dark days" of December, 1899, when the heart of the British Nation was sore stricken by the news of reverse after reverse in South Africa, the eyes of the country turned to Lord Roberts, so the close of the dark second week of February, 1904, found the Russians eagerly demanding the immediate employment at the front of General Kuropatkin, formerly Skobeleff's Chief of the Staff, and for some years past the Russian Minister of War.

Alexei Nicolaievitch Kuropatkin, now just fifty-six years of age, has had a wonderful career, more especially as, even in Russia, there is, among those who are qualified to speak with authority, a sharp divergence of opinion as to his real military qualifications. Indeed, there are those who hold that he was by no means the most gifted of even Skobeleff's not very well-chosen lieutenants, and who point to his six years' administration at the Russian War Office as productive of nothing in the shape of useful progress. But there has never been any question as to his dashing leadership, and many stories are told of his exploits in Central Asia, where he helped to storm Khojend, was present at the triumphant entry of the Russians into Samarkand, and, in a later campaign, set out with a wounded arm for a two-thousand-mile ride among the Tartar tribes of Kashgaria. At Plevna Kuropatkin added fresh lustre to his reputation by emulating the reckless bravery of Skobeleff himself in the attempt—at last successful—to force an entry into the fortress which Osman Pasha defended with such glorious stubbornness and skill. Later, as Governor of Transcaspia, Kuropatkin seems to have lost something of his old dash and vigour, but, even at the outbreak of war with Japan, he is more than ten years younger than was Lord Roberts when he accepted the command in South Africa. "A big, bearded man, who quite fills his uniform, with a very pleasant voice and very charming manners," he is described; one who, though as a nation he may not particularly love us, he [illegible] himself disposed to be [illegible] the individual Englishman.

One faculty possessed by General Kuropatkin, to which reference may be made in passing, is his capacity for gathering good men round him. Among those who have worked at headquarters with him is Lieutenant-General Gilinski, one of the most able and scientific officers in the Russian Army, and, when General Kuropatkin was in due course appointed to the chief command of the Russian land forces in the Far East, it was the most natural thing in the world that the Quartermaster-General should accompany him as Chief of the Staff. There was an additional good reason for the appointment

READING THE WAR NEWS: IN PETERSBURG

in that General Gilinski is regarded as an officer of great tact, whose services might prove useful in any complication which might arise between his chief and Admiral Alexeieff. For it was understood that the latter would for the present retain the Vice-royalty of the Far East.

ADMIRAL MAKAROFF,
NEW NAVAL COMMANDER AT PORT ARTHUR.

Almost simultaneously with the appointment of Kuropatkin to the command of the land forces in the Far East came the news of the selection of Vice-Admiral Makaroff, the Commandant-General of Kronstadt, to take command of the Russian fleet in the Pacific Ocean. It is, strangely enough, this naval officer whom the Russian populace, and, what is more extraordinary still, the rank and file of the Russian Army, believe to be the living personification of the dead Skobeleff!

The appointments of Kuropatkin and Makaroff are, of themselves, indicative of Russia's intention to act with energy in the crisis which has arisen since Japan took such a forceful initiative in regard to the naval attacks on Port Arthur and the landing of troops in Korea. Alexeieff may still be Viceroy of the Far East, and in that capacity have nominal control of the ships and troops. But it is clearly understood that Kuropatkin and Makaroff are going out "to save the situation," and that they will be given a free hand and, at any rate as regards the former, the privilege of direct communication with the Tsar. It will thus be seen that little time has been lost in putting things on an altogether new footing as regards naval and military leadership, and while Admiral Makaroff is hardly to be congratulated on the crippled condition of the fleet of which he is about to assume control, General Kuropatkin may well feel confidence in his capacity to win back Russia's lost credit by judicious handling of the large and daily increasing force of seasoned soldiers of whose enthusiastic devotion to himself he is well assured.

ADMIRAL STARK,
RECALLED NAVAL COMMANDER AT PORT ARTHUR.

Apart from her despatch of two of her

best leaders to the Far East, Russia tackled the questions of naval and military reinforcements with considerable vigour, but hardly with equal effectiveness in both cases. Some warships had been on their way to join the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur when the war broke out, but these, of course, were recalled, and for a time created a certain amount of innocent diversion by lurking in the Red Sea and stopping vessels which they thought might possibly be Japanese. Several British steamers were thus "brought to," and a little pleasant excitement afforded to those on board. In one instance an expert observer on the British ship was enabled to note that the Russian destroyer which came up to inspect the suspected liner was in anything but a ship-shape condition, while the utmost speed of which the vessel was capable appeared to be 16 knots. Clearly such craft would be of little use in the Sea of Japan, and it is not impossible that Admiral Makaroff had already asked that no reinforcements of this description should in future be sent to add to his already serious responsibilities in the way of slow and crippled ships.

TAKING FLAGS TO CHURCH TO BE BLESSED.

The revived Russian scheme for re-adjusting the balance of naval power in what may now be termed, with tolerable accuracy, Japanese waters, was a simple one. It consisted in the despatch of the Baltic squadron of some fifteen battleships and cruisers, accompanied by a fleet of colliers, and some thirty torpedo boats. There was talk of sending these by the north-east passage; but the whole scheme was somewhat nebulous, and did not serve to blind any competent observer to the fact that Japan, having already made a successful bid for the command of the sea, was not likely to let the advantage she has secured slip easily out of her hands. Moreover, in any case the Baltic squadron—or, rather, what was left of it, for, as a matter of fact, the Baltic fleet had already made a handsome contribution to Admiral Alexeieff's naval necessities—could not hope to reach either Port Arthur or Vladivostok for some months, since several vessels supposed to belong to it had yet to be completed, and the coaling arrangements undoubtedly presented some difficulty. For the present, then, these proposed naval reinforcements must be regarded rather in the light of a concession to Russian *amour propre* than as a practical contribution to the maintenance of the war.

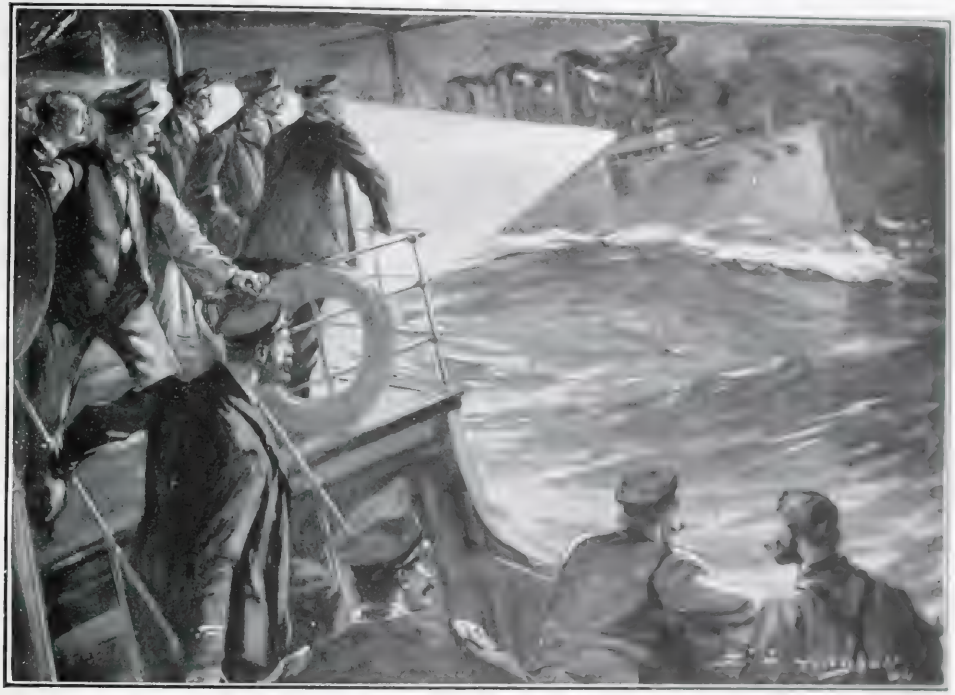
With the military reinforcements the case was altogether different. When the war broke out—and, indeed, for a long time before hostilities became imminent—the prevailing belief was that the Siberian Railway would almost immediately either break down of its own accord, or be so tampered with by the Japanese or their agents that it would become useless as a means of transporting either men or stores. Yet a month after war broke out the line was still working, notwithstanding several reported interruptions, and a certain amount of undoubted congestion and confusion to the existence of which allusion has been made in the preceding chapter. Now, even a single line of rail over which trains are proceeding at a very moderate speed can be made in a month to carry a very great number of men, and there is little doubt that in the four weeks succeeding the torpedo attack on Port Arthur a good many thousands of troops found their way to the Russian front. How many it is impossible to say, but it is probably not an exaggeration to estimate the total Russian land forces in the Far East in the second week of March at considerably over 200,000. At that period such a number would be the maximum that Russia could conveniently feed in a country like Manchuria. But, with practically unlimited resources to draw upon, and a railway which, at its worst, conveys from seven to nine hundred men daily, reinforcement becomes a cumulative process which cannot but eventually have distinctly impressive results.

In Russian military circles, the favourite scheme of land operations amounted, at the outset, to little more than an attempt to overrun Korea. The composition of the force designed to achieve this, in the circumstances, rather ambitious result was assumed to be constituted as follows: The advanced guard was to consist of eighteen regiments (to be reckoned at about 3,500 men each) of infantry, with a corresponding force of cavalry, ninety-six quick-firing guns, and three batteries of mountain artillery. The main body was to be composed of forty regiments, including a force of Cossack cavalry and 300 guns. Reserves were to be held in readiness to the north of Mukden, and telegraphic and telephonic communication was to be carefully maintained.

We shall see in due course how far it became possible to carry out this grandiose programme. But, incidentally, it may be remarked that an unquestioned moral advantage belongs to the nation which, at the outset of a great land campaign, is enabled to make its schemes on a quarter of a million basis without having to trouble itself as to the source from which such numbers will be available. We ourselves maintained more than a quarter of a million men in South Africa, but, in order to do so, we found it necessary to pay many individuals a sum per day which would secure the willing and excellent service of about a dozen Cossacks.

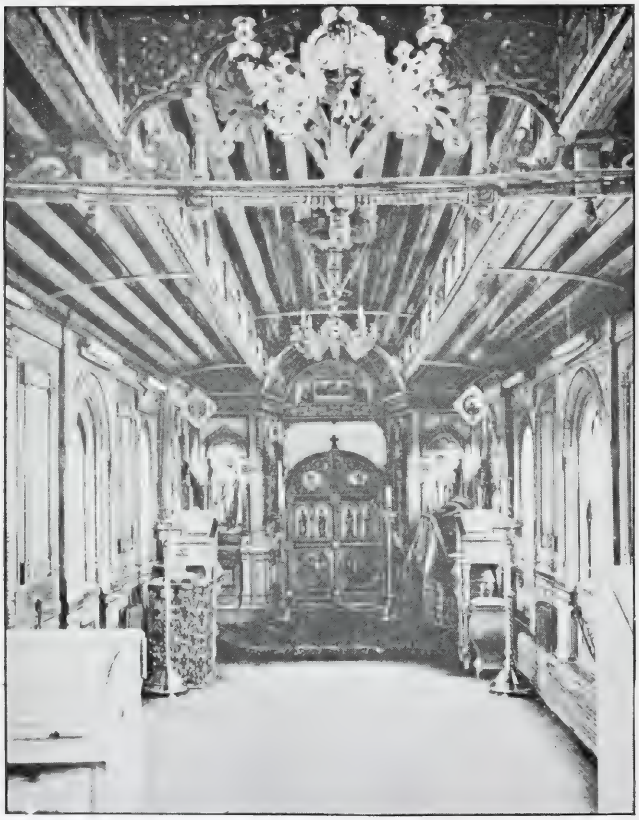
If, then, Russia was surprised, as one clever critic put it, *en flagrant délit de concentration* at the commencement of the war, she justified to some extent her claim to be considered a very great military power by the prompt and extensive measures she subsequently took to repair her deficiencies in the way both of troops and leaders. In a variety of other directions, too, she busied herself at home in letting the world see that she was fully awakened to the presence of war and to a sense of her new responsibilities.

In some instances these efforts were not particularly happy. One or two early manifestoes were issued by the Government of the Tsar in the hope, partly of alienating sympathy from Japan by describing her attack upon Port Arthur and her other early action as "treacherous," partly with a view to obscuring the utter unpreparedness of Russia by making it appear as if this were simply a natural outcome of the circumstances. Such rather transparent performances proved futile. Japan countered the accusation of treachery very effectively by pointing out that hostilities before a formal declaration of war were sanctioned by international usage and that Russia herself had not in times past scrupled to attack Turkey before formally declaring war upon her. As for Russian unpreparedness, the nations of the civilised world were not prepared to join with Russia in ascribing that to her previously pacific intentions. They did not fail to recall, in some instances with caustic humour, the fact that for months before the torpedo attack on Port Arthur Russia had been strengthening both her sea and land forces in the Far East, and had at times displayed considerable arrogance in the process.



BRITISH STEAMER "BROUGHT TO" IN THE RED SEA BY A RUSSIAN TORPEDO DESTROYER

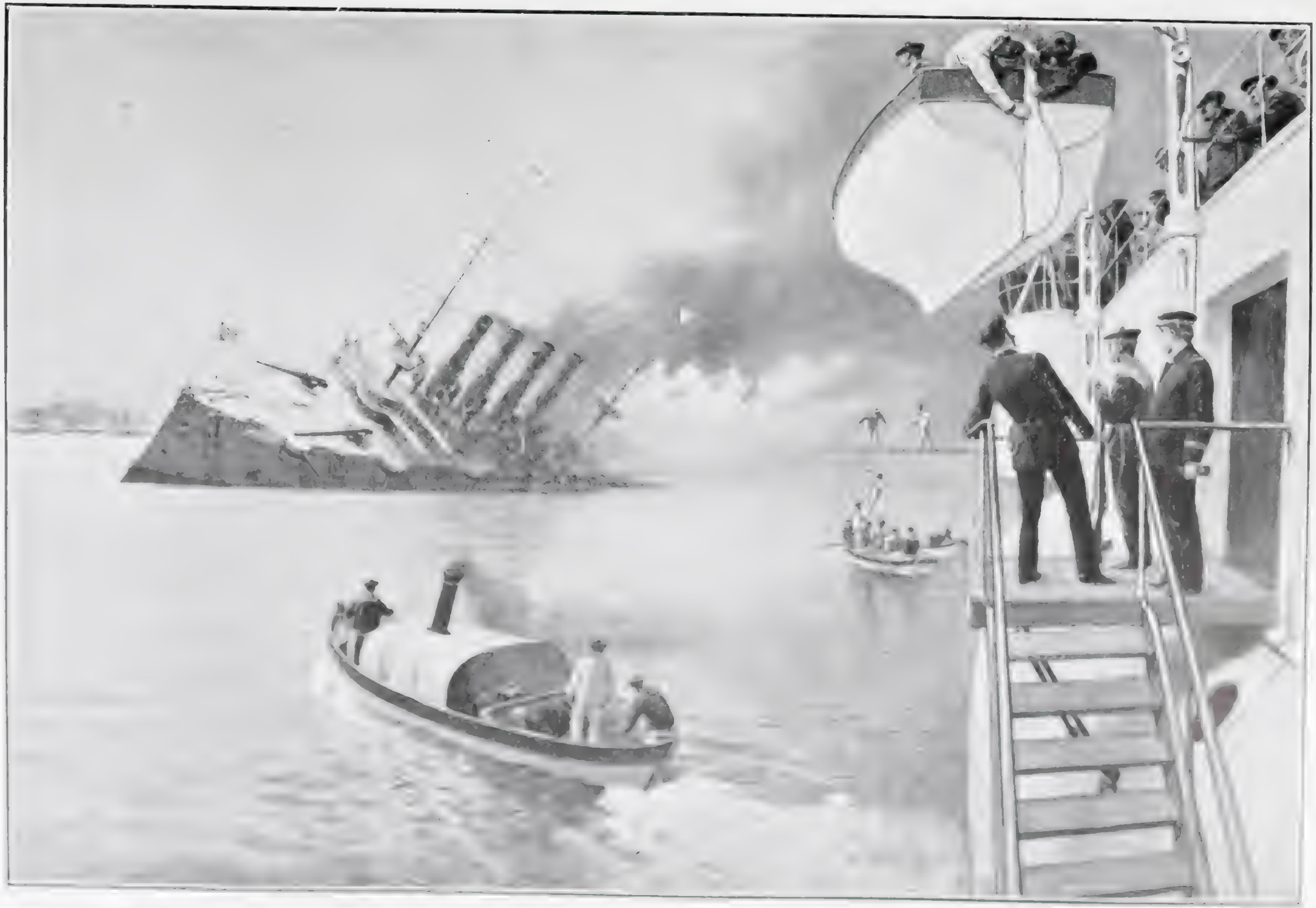
In other directions the people of Russia rose more worthily to the occasion. Some may be inclined to smile at the pious enterprise displayed by the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna in undertaking to despatch to the seat of war a series of churches on wheels, but it will be readily understood that, in a nation like Russia, this anxiety on the part of the Imperial Family for the spiritual welfare of the soldiers in the field was warmly appreciated. Equally grateful was the sentiment inspired by the energy with which the ladies of the Russian aristocracy threw themselves into the task of providing warm clothing and other comforts for the troops. Yet another instance of the fine enthusiasm of feminine Russia for the troops at the front was afforded by the eager zeal of thousands of educated young women of the better classes, who volunteered for employment as army nurses. All these girls were carefully informed of the privations and discomforts to be undergone in Manchuria, but not one in ten is said to have been daunted by the prospect, and thousands were rejected by the representatives of the Red Cross Society simply through the superabundance of applications.



A CHURCH CAR ON THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

The question of strengthening the Russian Fleet was taken up in several non-official quarters with marked enthusiasm, although the attempt of a St. Petersburg newspaper to open a subscription for replacing the sunk Russian ironclads with wooden ships does not appear to have been very warmly supported. A single nobleman sent in a contribution of £20,000 towards the cost of new warships, and offered to repeat the gift if the Government desired it. Finally, the Tsar himself intimated his intention to rebuild the *Varyag* and the *Korietz*, which were lost to Russia at Chemulpo on February 9th, at his own expense.

Such was the endeavour of the great Colossus of the North to recover the footing he had lost in his first sharp encounter with the Island Power of the East.



THE SINKING OF THE [illegible]

CHAPTER VIII.

AT VLADIVOSTOK—EXCURSIONS AND ALARMS—THE VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON—THE GOLDEN HORN—VLADIVOSTOK BOMBARDED—BACK TO PORT ARTHUR—A TORPEDO-BOAT BATTLE.

"WAR, the Red Angel, the Awakener," has produced a sudden and extraordinary change in Vladivostok, the terminus of the Siberian Railway and a strong competitor for the honour of being considered the true "Sovereign City of the East." For, although its population and commerce are still in process of development, its natural advantages are such that in time it can hardly fail to attract to itself a body of trade, and a mass of residents, which will render it a serious rival even to such old and, in their way, favoured ports as Hong-Kong, Calcutta, and Bombay. Lying on the slopes of a curving peninsula which overlooks a magnificent land-locked harbour, four miles long and half a mile wide, which is known as the Golden Horn, Vladivostok affords unsurpassed shelter to ships; it has many fine buildings, and in peace time is the centre of a good deal of gaiety, as well as of brisk and variegated commerce. But on February 9th, 1904, the progress of this important terminus was suddenly arrested, its natural attractions obscured, and its social brightness dimmed. For it was known that war had broken out with Japan, and, after such an attack as that delivered the previous day on Port Arthur, who could tell how long Vladivostok would remain untroubled by similar surprises?

The first indication of the altered state of affairs appears to have been the boom of three guns from one of the forts which line the eminences overhanging the Golden Horn. This is the signal for the mobilisation of the Siberian Army Corps in the Amur district, of which Vladivostok is one of the chief centres. Soon afterwards a proclamation of a state of siege, signed by the Commandant, General Vorognetz, is posted up, which conveys the further intimation that all inhabitants who wish to leave with their goods and chattels must apply for permission to the military authorities. Hundreds immediately take time by the forelock and crowd the outgoing trains, although, as a correspondent writes, the prospect of the journey does not seem a pleasant one. For there have been ugly rumours of late of obstructions on the line, and on February 8th three Japanese would-be bridge-wreckers are said to have been arrested near a little station in Eastern Manchuria. Indeed, for the last two or three days, the Manchurian trains have been accompanied by armed military escorts for fear of attempted outrage.

Those who take part in this early exodus are perhaps lucky, for such civilians as remain have trying times before them. Some have thoughtfully accumulated large stores of provisions in anticipation of the siege which it is felt will follow, but this precaution proves quite futile, for the military authorities swoop down and commandeer the little hoards without any scruple. Later in the month the Commandant issues a formal declaration to all civilians to leave the town, and even the local bank transfers itself, bag and baggage, to Khabarovsk, on the Amur River, whither runs a northern branch line known as the Ussuri Railway.

Something of a sensation is caused by the departure *en masse* of the Japanese residents. These are said to have been fully aware for some time past that an outbreak of hostilities was imminent, but when it comes they are none the less [illegible] stricken, and they [illegible] to remain a moment [illegible] necessary, although they are promised the protection of the authorities. They sell their property at any price they can get, and seventeen hundred of them, accompanied by the Japanese Consul, leave Vladivostok for Japan in a wild stampede, [illegible] day.

Photos: Imperial News Agency.

VIEWS OF VLADIVOSTOK HARBOUR IN WINTER.

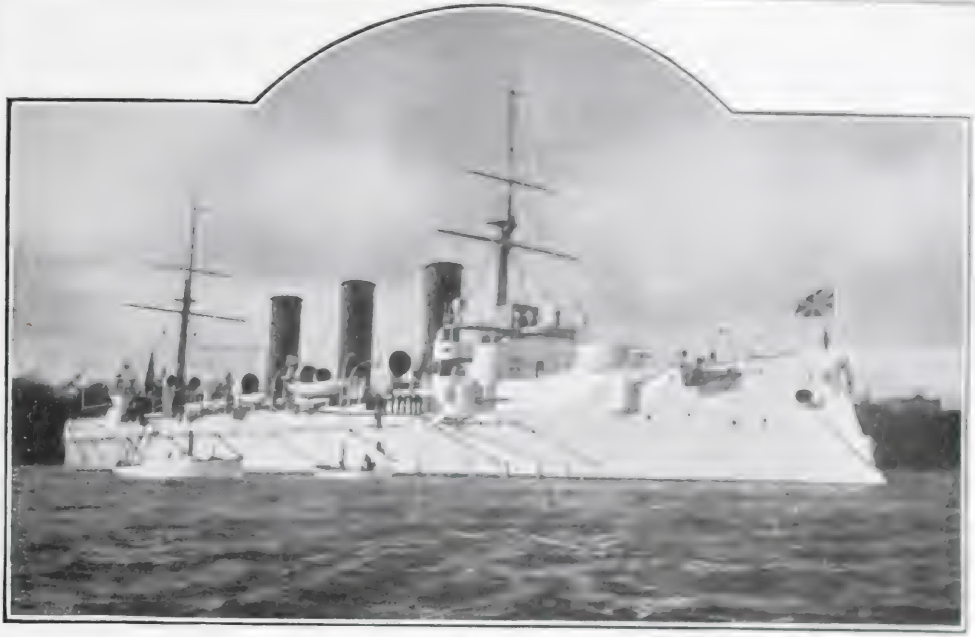
Perhaps those who remain in Vladivostok are not sorry to see the backs of the Japanese, for these [illegible] tales lately concerning them and their audacious experiments in the way of explosives and espionage. A short time back it is said that a Russian officer, who happened to be in a barber's shop at Vladivostok, hurled some abuse at the barber, who, in a passion exclaimed, "I am a captain in the Army, and will not be insulted," drew a revolver, and shot the Russian officer dead. There is talk, too, of an infernal machine which has recently been found placed in position with a view to blowing up a portion of the vitally important dock. The design is traced to two labourers who have disappeared, but who are understood to have been Japanese officers in disguise. Such reports may be largely exaggerated, but where is so much smoke there is sure to be some fire, and one can well understand that even the Russian military authorities of this strong fortress are somewhat relieved when the Japanese quarter of the town has been finally cleared.

Meanwhile mobilisation proceeds apace. The reserves are duly called up, and either brought into Vladivostok or despatched to other military centres by rail, the military authorities taking care to prohibit the sale of alcoholic liquors during the process. Horses for military purposes are freely requisitioned, and among the inhabitants of Vladivostok who are not actually engaged in military work volunteer cavalry and infantry corps are rapidly formed. A final touch of warlike realism is added by the attendance of over a hundred ladies of high social standing at medical classes with a view to acquiring knowledge fitting them to act as nurses.

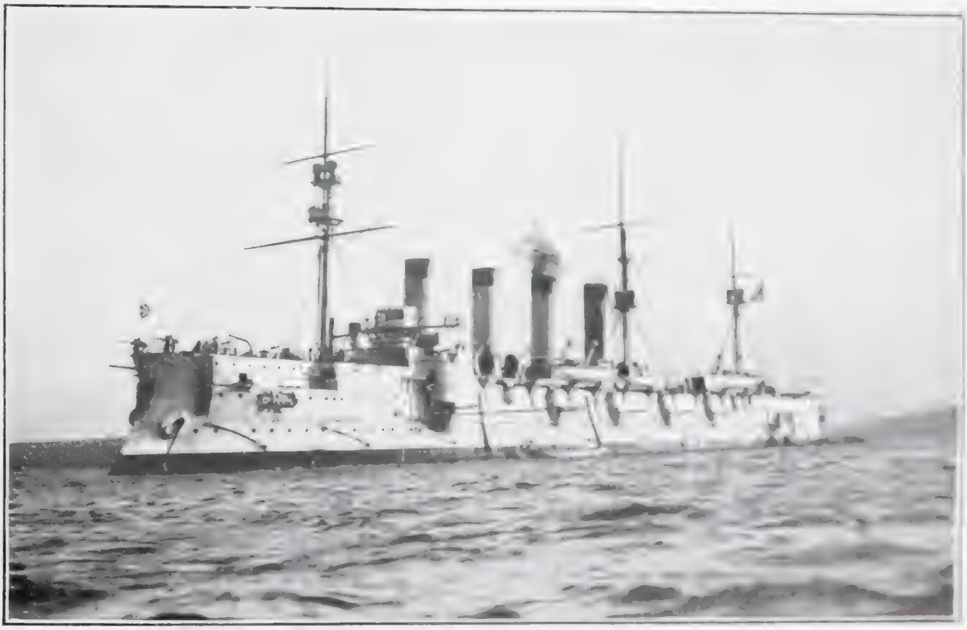
Almost immediately after the outbreak of war the Vladivostok squadron proceeds to sea. It consists, as has been already recorded in Chapter III., of four armoured cruisers—the *Rossia*, *Gromoboi*, *Rurik*, and *Bogatyr*, under the command of Rear-Admiral Baron Shtakelberg. It puts to sea with Captain Reitzenstein as Commodore, and intends to bombard the Japanese coast-town, Hakodate, but is prevented by a heavy snowstorm. To its doubtful exploit, the sinking of the *Nakanoura Maru*, one of two unarmed Japanese merchantmen which it encountered, allusion has been previously made. Some alleviation of this outrage, as described in Chapter III., is provided on the return of the squadron to Vladivostok, by the landing of the bulk of the *Nakanoura Maru's* crew. It appears that only two of the latter were drowned, the remainder, some two score in number, being transferred to one of the Russian cruisers, and subsequently sent back to Japan at the cost of the Russian Government by a German steamer.

The later movements of the Vladivostok squadron are for a time very obscure, and for weeks the whereabouts of these four vessels remained not only a mystery to British students of the operations, but also, it would seem, a matter of some concern to the Japanese fleet, which presently detached a squadron to search the northern waters and to make an incidental call at Vladivostok itself.

A note has already been made of the singularly enclosed nature of Vladivostok harbour. The opening to the Golden Horn is fronted to the south by a number of islands, of which the largest is Kazakavitch Island, separated from Vladivostok harbour by the Eastern Bosphorus strait. The peninsula on which Vladivostok lies separates the Amur and Ussuri bays, from each of which there is a practicable entrance by the Eastern Bosphorus



RUSSIAN 1ST CLASS CRUISER.



Photos: A. Renard, Kiel.

JAPANESE 1ST CLASS CRUISER.

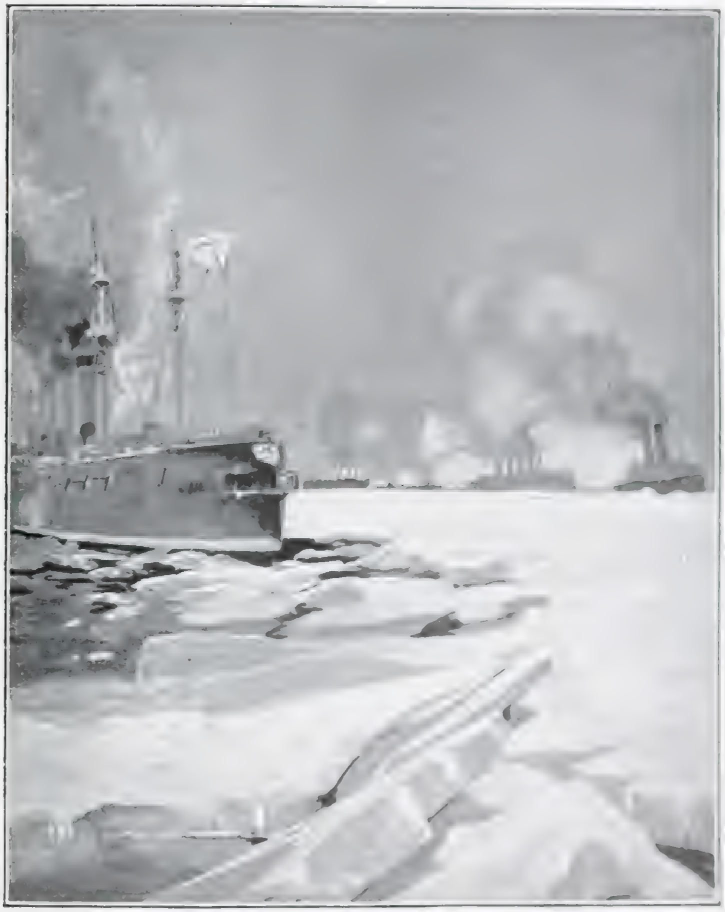
into the Golden Horn. It has long been a rule that not more than two foreign warships at one time should lie in the harbour of Vladivostok, and there is an interesting story told of the incident which led to this restriction. One evening a good many years ago the British China Squadron, under command of Admiral Sir Vesey Hamilton, was cruising in the neighbourhood of Vladivostok, when a dense fog came on which altogether obscured the opening to the harbour. Notwithstanding this drawback, the Admiral took his ships in, a magnificent feat of seamanship which few but British naval commanders would care to attempt in similar circumstances. The next morning the Russian Commandant looked forth over the harbour, and beheld the British fleet lying quietly at anchor, as if it were the most natural thing in the world for a massive squadron to be " discovered " in this dramatic fashion. It is hardly to be wondered at that the Russians should come to the conclusion that such surprises were hardly to be encouraged, and that, accordingly, good care should have been taken to impress upon foreign navies that similar feats of seamanship would be regarded with an unfriendly eye.

If the harbour of Vladivostok were clear from ice all the year round, it would be quite one of the finest in the world, and very possibly the Russians would have been well content with it, instead of seeking another warm-water port further south. As things are, they have at Vladivostok to endure the inconvenience of being icebound from the middle of December to the end of March. It is true that an icebreaker keeps open a narrow channel, but this is a makeshift, and one which entails considerable trouble when, as in 1903–4, the winter is particularly severe, and the ice has a thickness of three or four feet.

It is about ten o'clock on the morning of March 8th when the inhabitants of Vladivostok receive an official notification to the effect that a Japanese squadron has been sighted, and that a bombardment may be looked for. One can imagine the excitement created by this startling intelligence in a community which began anticipating an attack from the sea a month ago, but which latterly has been so greatly troubled by the question of its daily food supply that the risks of shot and shell have probably been well-nigh forgotten. For during the past fortnight there has been a sudden and ominous scarcity of provisions observable, and fresh meat is no longer to be had at any price. According to a *Daily Express* correspondent, a number of soldiers were sent on March 2nd to the islands fronting the harbour to shoot deer for food. On their return the game they had secured was literally torn to pieces by the waiting crowd on the beach, and such fragments as could be secured by civilians willing to pay for the luxury changed hands at over a sovereign a pound.

To return from this commissariat detail to the Japanese squadron, which is now plainly seen on the horizon making its way towards the eastern or Ussuri Bay entrance to the Golden Horn. By the Russians the squadron is thought to consist of five battleships and two cruisers, but a likelier estimate says that the ships were the armoured cruisers *Nisshin*, *Kasuga*, *Yacumo*, and *Idzumo*, the protected cruisers *Matsushima* and *Hashidate*, and the old battleship *Chin Yen*.

Examination with powerful glasses shows that the ships are covered with ice, having already passed through some miles of frozen sea. Doubtless the thicker ice inshore delays their progress, and it is not until past one o'clock that the squadron comes within about five miles of the harbour and opens fire.



VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON [illegible]
THROUGH THE ICE OUT OF VLADIVOSTOK HARBOUR.

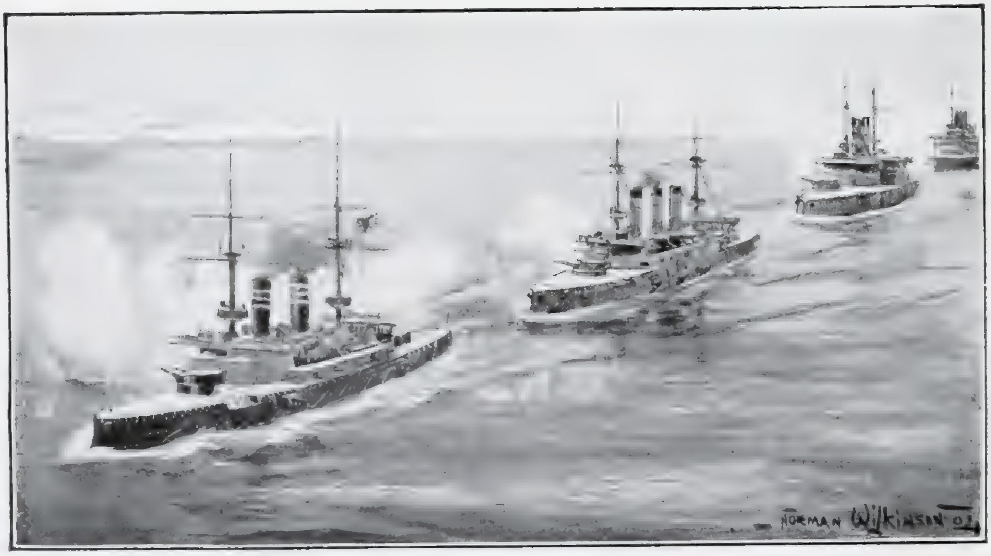
Only five of the vessels take part in the bombardment, two of the cruisers having been left further out at sea, presumably for fear lest a shot from the forts may penetrate their light armour.

The spectacle is a fine one. The five ships approach to within a distance of a little over three miles of the shore of the peninsula which forms the harbour, doubtless in the favourite Japanese formation known as "line ahead," or, as lay spectators might term it, in single file. As they come on [illegible] both port and starboard broadsides, evidently with little [illegible], [illegible] to warm the guns. Then the [illegible] guns of the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the harbour [illegible] the [illegible] alters its direction and steams along the shore, each ship firing its port guns as it follows the lead of the flagship, possibly one of the two new cruisers which Japan bought so fortunately from the Argentine Government.

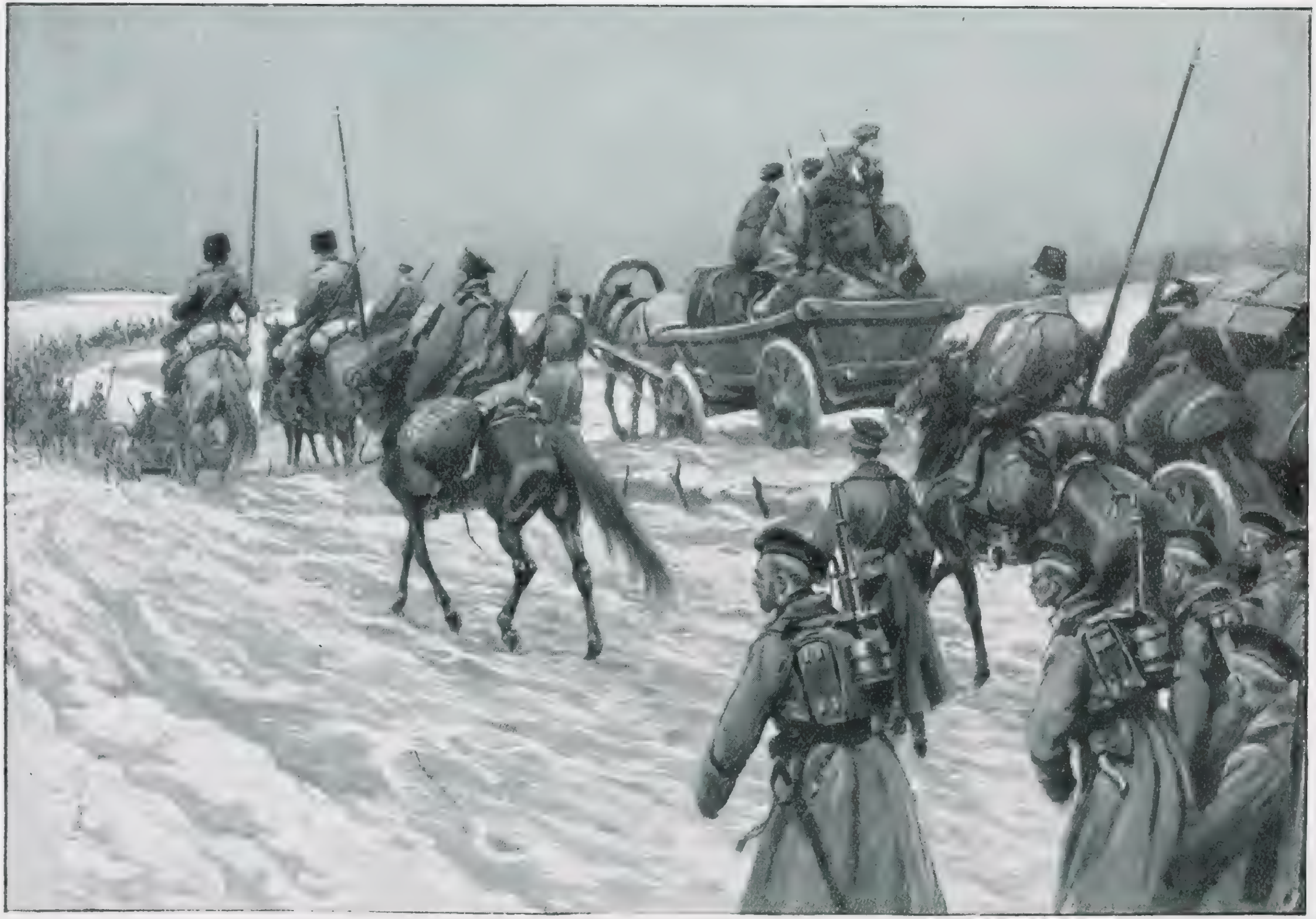
The squadron turns thrice and fires continually, except while turning. The bombardment lasts forty minutes, during which period it is estimated that nearly two hundred shells must have been fired, mostly from 12-in. and 6-in. guns. After the third turn the ships cease firing and steam off to the south, finally disappearing about half-past five in the evening.

From the official Japanese report of this attack it is evident that the principal object in view was to search the Golden Horn for the four Russian cruisers composing the Vladivostok squadron. Nothing was seen of these vessels, and with this negative result the Japanese had to be satisfied For, apart from "moral and intellectual damages," it is pretty clear that the bombardment did not have much effect. It did not even draw the fire of the forts, which remained silent, awaiting, as the Russian account says, the closer approach of the enemy. It has been unkindly suggested that this is another way of saying that the guns of the fortress were outranged or lacked ammunition—and, indeed, this is possible, in view of the extent to which the fortification of Vladivostok is believed to have been neglected in order to provide for the needs of Port Arthur.

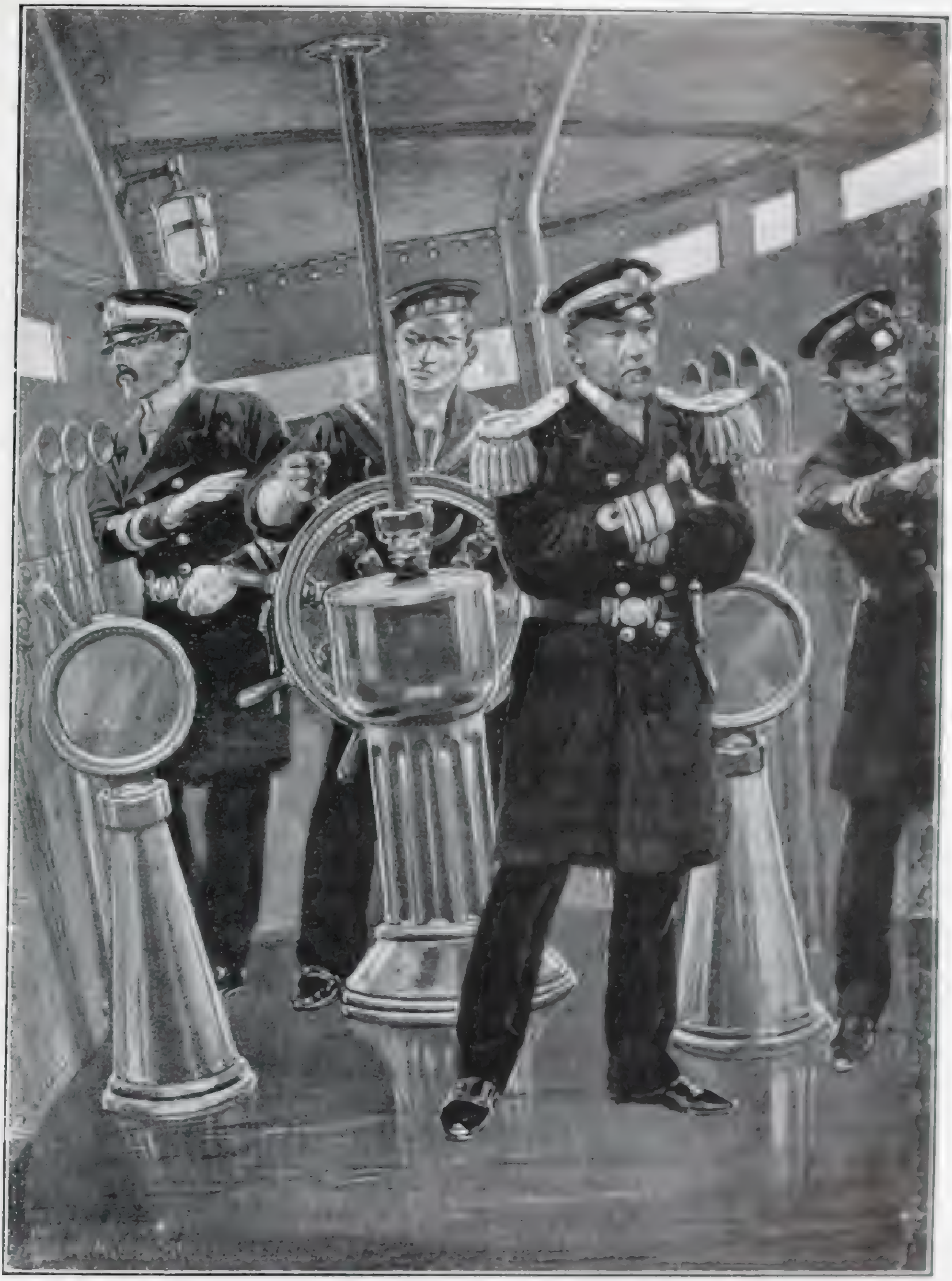
In Vladivostok town the only damage admitted is of a very trifling character. One poor woman is said to have been killed, and in the courtyard of the Siberian Naval Barracks a shell exploded and slightly wounded five sailors. Another shell produced a noteworthy incident by dropping into the house of a Colonel Shukoff. The projectile passed through a bedroom without exploding, then buried itself in a wall, and burst. Near the wall was a safe, over which a sentry was posted, and when the shell burst, the soldier



"LINE AHEAD" FORMATION OF ATTACK.



RUSSIAN TRANSPORT TRAIN CROSSING THE PLAINS OF MANCHURIA.



ADMIRAL TOGO ON THE CONNING-TOWER OF HIS FLAGSHIP, DIRECTING A NAVAL ACTION

7

was covered with *débris*. The gallant fellow took the visitation very calmly, and merely shouted for someone to carry the regimental colours out of the house. This duty was promptly performed by the colonel's wife and a soldier.

It may be that some damage was caused to the forts, but of this, of course, no details were forthcoming. Altogether, the bombardment, even if it did not cost, as the Russians imagined, £20,000 in powder and shell, seems to have been a curiously futile performance. For, while a steady rain of bursting projectiles may have in some instances an important moral effect, apart from the material damage done, a forty minutes' bombardment which is, practically speaking, ineffective is apt rather to raise the spirits of a garrison than to depress them.

That the Japanese were not fully satisfied with the information they had acquired on the 6th is shown by their reappearance on the following day. After reconnoitring some of the bays in the vicinity of Vladivostok, the warships again approached the eastern entrance to the Golden Horn, and, seeing no trace of the Vladivostok squadron, again retired.

Let us now hie back to Port Arthur, which we left (at the close of Chapter V.) undergoing, on February 25th, a gentle reminder of the continued presence of the main Japanese Fleet in the neighbourhood. A few days later these attentions were fitfully renewed, and in the very early morning of March 2nd the gunners in the Port Arthur forts were galvanised into sudden and tremendous activity by the sight of numerous lights approaching the harbours, lights which could hardly be other than those of attacking torpedo-craft. This notion was favoured by the sound of firing out at sea, evidently from the guns of battleships or cruisers which were backing up the "mosquito" flotilla. In a few moments the Russian artillerymen were at their posts, guns were trained on the moving lights, and a hot fire was kept up for an hour. Alas! not even the previous experience of the mock battleships had taught the Russians to beware of Japanese craftiness, more especially in all that relates to sailoring. After all this furious cannonade it was discovered that the lights were merely those of lamps fixed to the masts of lumber-rafts which had been quietly towed towards the harbour entrance by a couple of torpedo-boats. The latter had then given the rafts a shove and retired, subsequently firing a shot or two to draw the attention of the Port Arthur sentries to the simple little scheme of illumination provided. Of course, the idea was merely to make the Russians waste ammunition which could no longer be replaced; and it succeeded admirably, as General Stoessel, the Commandant at Port Arthur, must have ruefully admitted when he glanced at the return of rounds thus hastily expended.

For a few days after this Port Arthur was left alone, and Russian reconnaissance failed to discover any trace of the Japanese ships. On March 5th Admiral Makaroff, the new commander of the Russian Fleet in the Far East, had arrived at Harbin, and early in the following week he came on to Port Arthur, where he cannot have found things greatly to his liking. For it is becoming evident by this time not only that the ships in harbour have suffered more than Admiral Alexeieff's optimism has led the world to believe, but also that a not altogether satisfactory spirit prevails among the officers of the garrison. Only a day or two back General Stoessel has had occasion to issue an order severely reprimanding officers for indulging in useless criticisms of their superiors, instead of devoting themselves to their duties in connection with the defence of the fortress. Admiral Makaroff probably knows that this objectionable frame of mind is the result of being "bottled up" by a strong and energetic enemy, and he takes early and drastic steps to bring about a better state of affairs. He has not to wait long for an opportunity of putting his new policy into practice.

At midnight on March 9th two flotillas of Japanese torpedo-boat destroyers appear before Port Arthur and proceed cautiously to reconnoitre. No enemy is seen, and at dawn the second flotilla commences to lay a number of specially contrived mechanical mines. The forts discover the intruders, and keep up an intermittent fire on them, which does not, however, hinder them in their tricky and rather dangerous work.

Meanwhile Admiral Makaroff has been informed of the approach of the enemy, and he promptly orders six of his own torpedo craft to leave the harbour and give battle. A different attitude this from that of the unfortunate Admiral Stark, who seemed so absolutely stunned by the previous Japanese attacks that even prompt retaliation—much less vigorous anticipation—was apparently the last course that occurred to him.

GENERAL STOESSEL

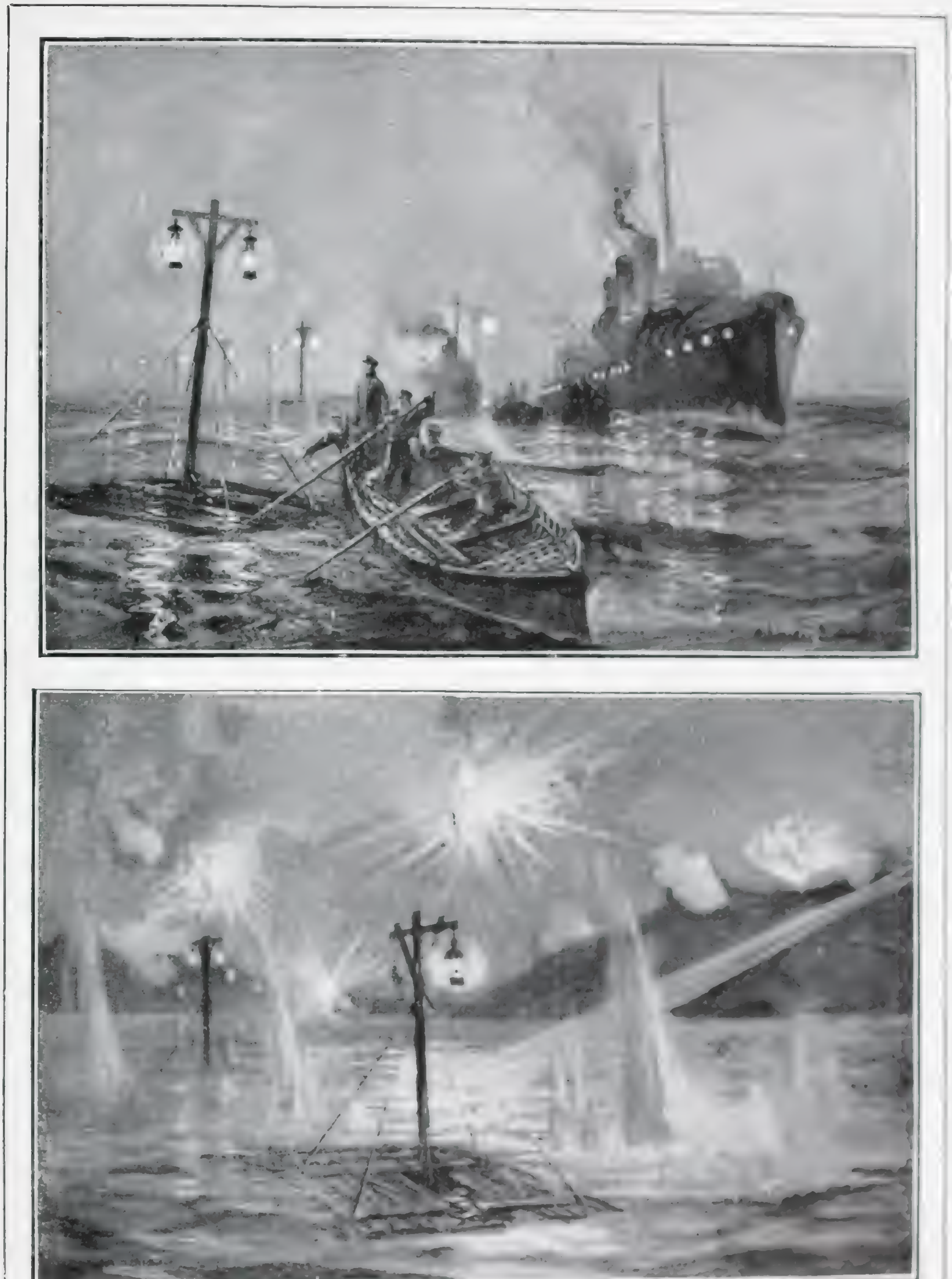
At 4.10 a.m. the Russian destroyer flotilla, under command of Captain Matoussevitch, arrives off the lighthouse on the Liau-ti-shan Peninsula on the western side of the entrance channel to Port Arthur. Here they come in sight of three Japanese destroyers, the *Asashio, Kasumi* and *Akatsuki* under command of Captain Shojiro Asai. According to all ordinary conceptions of the "game" of naval warfare, the smaller flotilla should in such a case, more especially if it has the requisite "heels," beat a speedy retreat. But Captain Asai does not trouble himself to consider the prudential side of the question. Evidently he is cast in the same mould as the commanders of the *Ikazuchi* and *Hayatori*, to whose individual exploits testimony was borne in Chapter V. Although the odds are one to two, he does not hesitate, but orders his craft to close with the enemy, and an action ensues the like of which has never hitherto been recorded in naval history.

It is only fair to preface any account of this hot little engagement by a qualification of the statement of the chances in favour of the Russians. There is no question that the Japanese destroyers are much finer craft than those opposed to them. The *Asashio* is a 30-knot ship built by Thorneycroft some five years ago, and the *Kasumi* and *Akatsuki* are 31-knot vessels built by Yarrow in 1901. But the superiority possessed by the Japanese is not only in speed. Russian destroyers are armed mostly with one 12-pounder and several 3-pounders ; while the Japanese ships carry, in addition to the heavier guns, 6-pounders, the heavier bursting charge of which causes far more damage to a vessel and its crew than is the case with the lighter projectile. The Japanese destroyers are particularly " well found " and well manned, the crew numbering about fifty-five. Each destroyer is of about 300 tons burden.

The manner in which the three Japanese destroyers come into action cannot but be a little disconcerting at the outset to the Russian flotilla. With an impetuous rush they bear down on their opponents, and in a few minutes the ships engaged are so close that they almost touch each other. It is a battle of wasps and hornets, and many a fierce sting is suffered and inflicted. The firing is fast and furious, but from the first the Japanese have the advantage in this respect. Evidently they have foreseen this kind of conflict, and their first thought is to concentrate their fire so as to put the 12-pounders of the enemy out of action, leaving each hostile destroyer with only 3-pounders against 12- and 6-pounders—a very serious disadvantage when shells of cardboard thickness, crowded with machinery, are in question. In all probability the details of this engagement will never be known with anything like accuracy, so tremendous must have been the excitement, so absorbing and many-sided the interest, of the struggle. Picture nine little ships, armed with thirty or forty quick-firing guns and manned by seamen of two nations renowned through ages for courage and endurance—picture, if you can, these vessels almost bow to bow, the guns roaring, the shells perforating the frail hulls and bursting, the agony of poor wretches torn to pieces by flying fragments of metal, or scalded to death by escaping steam, the decks swept by a storm of lead, and over all the smoke of battle drifting lightly in the frosty air.

Both sides suffer a good deal of damage during the action, principally to their machinery, and on the Japanese side the *Akatsuki's* auxiliary steam pipe is destroyed. Fire breaks out on one of the Russian vessels, and her engines are seen to have been badly knocked about. Early in the fight two of the Russian destroyers have sustained such severe injuries that they prudently draw off and make for the harbour. After about half an hour from the start the other four destroyers retire, still fighting, until they reach the protection of the forts.

One of the heroes of this brisk combat is Engineer Minamisawa, of the Japanese ship *Kasumi*, who has displayed extraordinary gallantry in circumstances in which courage needs to be remarkable indeed if it is to receive special mention.



THE JAPANESE RUSE [illegible]

(1) *Tampering the channel lights.* (2) *The* [illegible]

TORPEDO DESTROYER *SAZANAMI.*
(Built for the Japanese Government by Yarrow & Co., Ltd.)

This fine young officer has already come to the front twice, having been commended for his courageous conduct both in the first torpedo attack on Port Arthur and in the attempt to sink the old merchant ships in the harbour entrance. In the present action he receives a dangerous wound from which, it is feared, he can hardly recover; but the Mikado promptly honours his splendid exhibition of fighting spirit by promoting him to Chief Engineer, and awarding him an order equivalent to our Victoria Cross.

About two hours after the close of this action—that is, about 7 a.m.—the second Japanese flotilla, having laid its mines, is leaving the roadstead outside Port Arthur, when it sights two Russian destroyers, which have evidently been sent out for reconnoitring purposes and are now returning to the harbour. Even the numerical odds of the previous combat are reversed here, for there are four destroyers in the Japanese flotilla. Of these, again, one at least, the *Sazanami*, is a 31-knot boat, and sister to the *Kasumi* and *Akatsuki;* while one of the Russians is a distinctly inferior vessel, the *Steregutchy*, a small destroyer of no particular speed. The Russians are certainly not to be blamed for attempting to make the harbour, but the endeavour proves futile. The swift Japanese destroyers give chase and intercept the *Steregutchy* and her consort, and an engagement ensues, in some respects even hotter than that just fought between Captain Asai's and Captain Matoussevitch's flotillas.

Again the struggle becomes, so to speak, hand to hand. The Russians fight with desperation, and their enemies subsequently bear generous testimony to their devoted gallantry. On board the *Steregutchy* a lurid incident takes place which recalls the old days when "boarding" was the constant accompaniment of naval warfare. So close has the *Sazanami* approached that a Japanese blue-jacket is enabled to leap aboard the Russian ship, the commander of which is just emerging from his cabin. The Russian officer draws his cutlass to protect himself from this unwelcome visitor, but the agile Jap deals him a terrible blow on the head, and then literally, so the story runs, kicks his prostrate body overboard and he is drowned. The Russian lieutenant now takes command, but falls shot in both legs. The sub-lieutenant is also killed, and, when ultimately the Japanese take temporary possession of the battered craft, thirty dead and horribly mutilated bodies are counted on the deck, the remainder of the crew having mostly jumped overboard to avoid being taken prisoners. A gallant effort is made by the Japanese to save them, but is frustrated by the firing from the forts. The *Steregutchy* herself is taken in tow by the *Sazanami*; but she is leaking badly, the sea is rough, and finally the tow-rope parts. Eventually the ship sinks, taking down with it two Russian sailors who have locked themselves in a cabin aft and have steadily refused all persuasion to come on deck. Out of a complement of over fifty only two stokers and two wounded are saved.

On the Japanese side considerable damage is recorded by the Special Naval Correspondent of the *Times*, who mentions that one destroyer was hit on the water-line and two compartments flooded. "As the quick-firing ammunition was wet, the vessel was unable to participate further in the action. Her officers escaped narrowly. The lieutenant, sub-lieutenant, and a signalman were on the bridge when a shot from a 12-pounder struck the 12-pounder platform just in front. One man was killed. The shell exploded, and the bridge was swept with splinters. The

Photo: S. Cribb, Southsea.

12-POUNDER GUN ON A JAPANESE VESSEL.

binnacle and the engine-room telegraphs were injured. The same vessel received a 3-pounder projectile through her hull. No material damage, however, was done. The davits were shot away, and other marks of shot and splinter damage could be seen on the funnels and deck fittings." Four days later, adds the correspondent, all the damage had been repaired.

The second Russian destroyer made good its escape, largely owing, it is said, to the reckless daring of a young midshipman named Palovsky. The mechanical steering gear of the vessel had been disabled, the man at the wheel had been shot, and the vessel was drifting rapidly towards the four Japanese destroyers. Palovsky, at the risk of his life, sprang to the wheel, and with shot falling fast around him skilfully steered the vessel out of danger.

It is noteworthy that when the plight of the *Steregutchy* became evident to the Russians at Port Arthur Admiral Makaroff made a personal effort to save her. Hoisting his flag on the fast cruiser *Novik*, whose injuries received in the first bombardment of Port Arthur had been repaired, he steamed hurriedly out of the harbour, accompanied by the *Bayan*. But by this time the Japanese cruiser squadron had come up, and the Russian Admiral was forced by common prudence to withdraw and leave the doomed destroyer to its fate.

Photo: S. Cribb, Southsea.

RUSSIAN ARMOURED CRUISER *BAYAN*.

CHAPTER IX.

PORT ARTHUR AGAIN BOMBARDED—A STORM OF SHELLS—[illegible]—A GLOOMY OUTLOOK

THE two engagements between destroyers described in the last chapter proved to be the prelude to an operation which, if less brisk and full of vigorous incident, was vastly more impressive, and perhaps more far-reaching in its ultimate results. We have seen how Admiral Makaroff, emerging from Port Arthur harbour with the *Novik* and *Bayan*, was compelled to retire in view of the support rendered to the enemy's destroyers by the Japanese cruiser squadron. But beyond the latter there was a greater danger looming in the shape of the main squadron of the Japanese Navy, commanded by Admiral Togo himself, and consisting of six battleships. At 8 a.m. on March 10th, while the cruiser squadron was backing up the second destroyer flotilla, the main squadron also moved majestically towards the head of the Liau-ti-shan Peninsula, and, taking up a position unassailable by the Russian fortress artillery, commenced at 10 a.m. a much heavier bombardment than any to which Port Arthur had yet been subjected. This bombardment lasted three hours, and, although, like most bombardments, it produced little immediate perceptible result, and strenuous efforts were made by Russia to minimise the reported damage, it is possible that, when the war comes to be viewed as a whole, this nerve-shattering episode may be found to have been a real turning-point in the history of the operations. In any case, the bare record of it affords a striking picture of the possibilities of modern war conducted on strictly scientific principles.

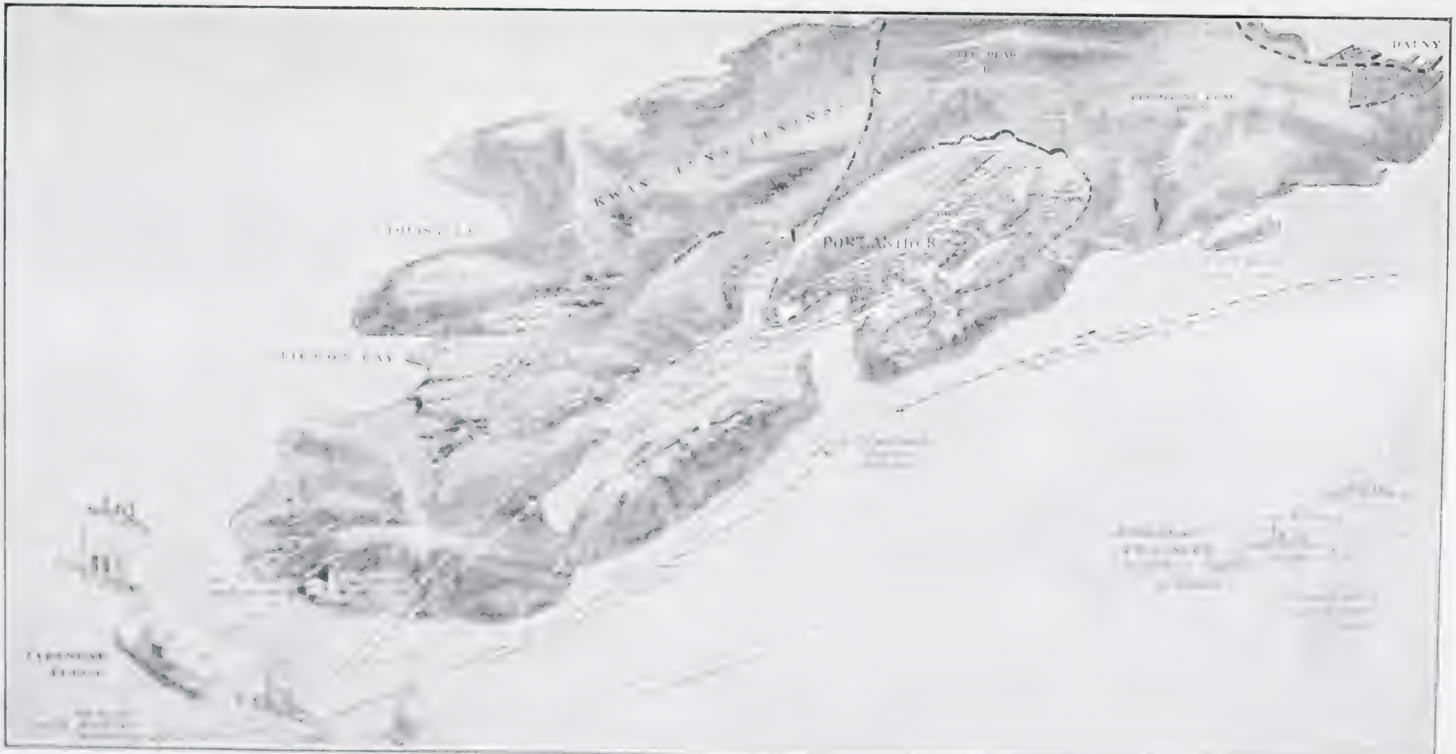
It is importantly instructive, as well as deeply interesting, to note the admirable skill displayed by the Japanese in all their preparations for this particular bombardment. It has been mentioned above that Admiral Togo's battleships opened fire from a position in which they could not be reached by the Russian guns, although, as will be seen later, they themselves were excellently placed for dropping shells from their 12-in. guns into both the harbour and the forts. This was simply but effectively accomplished by firing from behind the Liau-ti-shan Peninsula and relying on an absolutely accurate knowledge of the topography of Port Arthur, and of the ranges, for the general conduct of the bombardment. But another and significant precaution was taken. After the sinking of the *Steregutchy*, the Japanese cruiser squadron drew up in line with the town of Port Arthur, due east of the harbour entrance, and at right angles to the line of fire. In this position they were enabled to watch the effects of each shot, and to signal it by wireless telegraphy to Admiral Togo's flagship. Any more complete and absolutely practical exhibition of up-to-date methods of bombardment it would, indeed, be difficult to suggest; and the exhibition in this case is the more effective since it is the result of Japanese study and forethought alone. Let us now, with the help of such details as are available, endeavour to gain some clear idea of this dramatic scene. On the Japanese side only the battleships are firing, and on the Russian side only the forts and the *Novik* and *Bayan* reply. Why, it may be asked, do not the larger warships still lying in the harbour move out and make some sort of demonstration with their guns, a fair proportion of which are as powerful as those of the Japanese battleships? The answer is a sadly simple one. They may have been repaired sufficiently to enable them to get to sea—and, thanks to a Scotch engineer, some remarkable work has been done in this direction—but to get in sight of the bombarding squadron they must leave the shelter of the forts and expose themselves to the direct fire of the enemy's guns. Moreover, there are the mines which the Japanese have been laying to be considered, and such a cautious exit as would have to be made in the circumstances might of itself prove disastrous by inviting a torpedo attack. Accordingly, the Russian warships lie supine in the inner harbour, and presently suffer, according to several credible accounts, no inconsiderable damage from the enemy's "high-angle" fire.

To the lay reader a word of explanation as to the meaning of this term "high-angle fire" may be necessary. In simple language, it is the result of pointing the muzzle of a gun into the air so that a shot fired from it reaches a considerable height, and then drops in a bold curve upon whatever it strikes. To take a common example, the effect of high-angle fire upon a ship would be to pierce the deck instead of the sides, and this, of course, is a very desirable result, but only to be attained when the range is hit off to a nicety. High-angle fire is a necessity when intervening hills screen the objects it is sought to hit, and is then mere guess-work, unless supported by observation such as in this case was carried out by the Japanese cruiser squadron.

Although the Russian warships are mostly silent, and the fort guns cannot reach the Japanese battleships, there is no lack of firing on the side of the defenders at one time or another of the bombardment. Captain Troubridge, the British Naval Attaché at Tokio, who witnessed the bombardment, says that the Russian shells which fell around his vessel during the action literally churned up the sea, although it would seem that the damage actually done by them was insignificant.

The Japanese battleships fire from their 12-inch guns only, and the firing is at the rate of about one shot a minute, since in the three hours 150 shells are hurled into the town and harbour, and among the forts. Of these, over 110 are said to have fallen in the town.

The effect of a single shell from a 12-inch gun may be sufficiently appalling. Eight hundred and fifty pounds of metal with a bursting charge capable of rending it into countless fragments, the smallest of which may cause frightful mutilation if not sudden death—such a dread visitor a hundred times repeated in the course of one short morning cannot but create something if not of panic fear, at least of nervous apprehension. That great painter of battle word-pictures, Archibald Forbes, tells us that in the days of the Commune the women of Paris grew so accustomed to the noise of the whistling bullets on


DALNY
PORT ARTHUR
KWAN TUNG PENINSULA
LOUISA BAY
PIGEON BAY

[illegible] PORT ARTHUR.

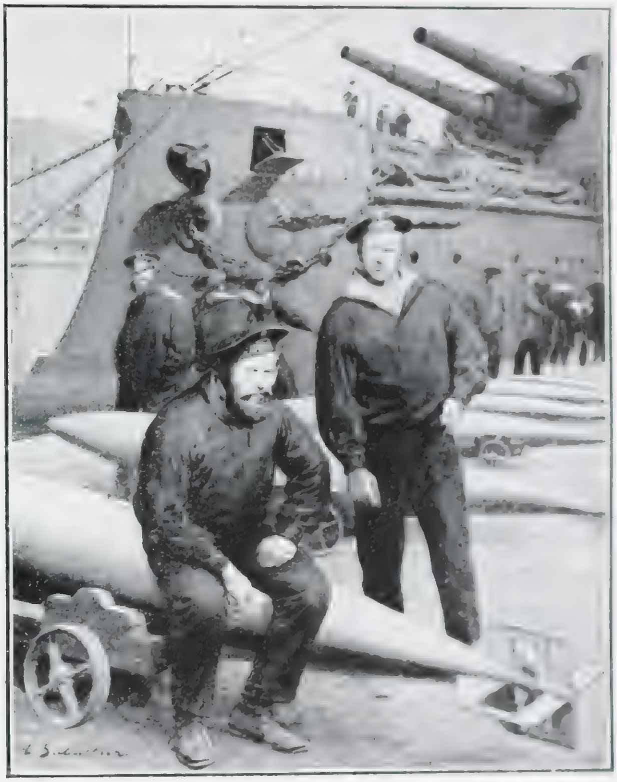
[illegible]

their roofs that in their crazy courage they called them "sparrows." In many other bombardments familiarity with danger has bred contempt; while in others, such as the leaden storm which raged round Paardeberg in the Boer War, security from immediate personal injury may have given temporary confidence. But these are not in the same plane with a three hours' bombardment, at the rate of one 850-pounder shell per minute. Even where there is no risk to self or valued belonging, even where there is no painful sight in view of men or women hurled suddenly into eternity, or of human flesh shockingly mangled as the result of some near explosion, the steady, continuous advent of these huge deadly messengers from an unseen enemy—for the bombarding battleships must have been invisible from the town—cannot but have effect even upon those stout hearts in the Port Arthur garrison to whom the inspiring watchword "Mighty Russia and the Tsar!" is a constant impulse in conditions of less passive sufferance.

The full tale of the scenes witnessed in Port Arthur during those terrific three hours is not likely ever to be told. But some idea of the awful severity of the bombardment maybe gathered from details collected by responsible correspondents, notably by Mr. Percival Phillips, the representative of the *Daily Express*, who carefully cross-examined at Shanghai the crews of three Norwegian vessels which left Port Arthur on March 13th, and obtained from these eye-witnesses some deeply interesting and significant particulars as to the damage done in the inner harbour. One of the Norwegian vessels was lying alongside the Russian battleship *Retvisan*, and on the latter's deck a shell was seen to fall, which, exploding, killed nineteen officers and men. A cable's length off, a Russian cruiser was hit on the water-line and set on fire, eighty casualties resulting. The Russian hospital ship *Mongolia* was struck, and half a dozen men killed, the *Sevastopol* damaged by two shells, and the docks, it is believed, badly injured.

Many non-combatants are said to have lost their lives during this bombardment. From the deck of one of the Norwegian steamers a shell was seen to fall among a group of spectators who had gathered on rising ground in order to watch the fire from the attacking fleet. Twenty-five of these hapless mortals are said to have been killed. The same fate overtook three Government clerks who were hurrying from the Port Admiral's office. A very tragic incident was the death of the wife of Colonel Baron Frank, who was struck by the fragments of a bursting shell and killed instantly. A lawyer, M. Sidorski, and several other civilians, lost their lives, and numerous wounds and other injuries were sustained. General Stoessel, the Commandant, and his staff were sprinkled with splinters of a shell, but were not hurt.

It must be recorded that, although placed at a disadvantage by the skill of the Japanese in choosing their positions, Admiral Makaroff displayed great energy in doing all that could be done in the way of taking precautions and effecting repairs, even while the bombardment was proceeding. Not content with personally attempting to rescue the *Steregutchy*, he ordered steamers to be sunk in the channel entrance, so as to reduce the fairway to less than 300 feet, and the desperate operation of marking out the narrowed channel with buoys was carried out under fire. During the bombardment, too, he despatched the destroyer flotilla under Captain Prince Lieven to reconnoitre. Later, by encouraging proclamations and increasing activity, he showed himself to be not only worthy of his high scientific reputation, but one of those rare spirits who rise to great emergencies, and play a losing game with as much confidence and tenacity as a winning one. Comparisons in such cases are seldom happy, but we may surely pay the gallant Russian Admiral the compliment of saying that he was the Sir George White of bombarded Port Arthur, and even the Japanese may well have felt the change produced by his [illegible] presence.



RUSSIAN SAILORS [illegible] TORPEDOES ON THE [illegible] AT PORT ARTHUR.

The bombardment continued, as has been mentioned, until past 1 p.m. In the meantime a detached squadron of cruisers steamed round to Talien-wan and destroyed the buildings on the Sanshan island in the entrance to the bay. Two cruisers also scouted the western coast of the entrance to Port Arthur, but did not see the enemy. The action was finally discontinued at [illegible] p.m., and the entire Japanese fleet [illegible] withdrew.

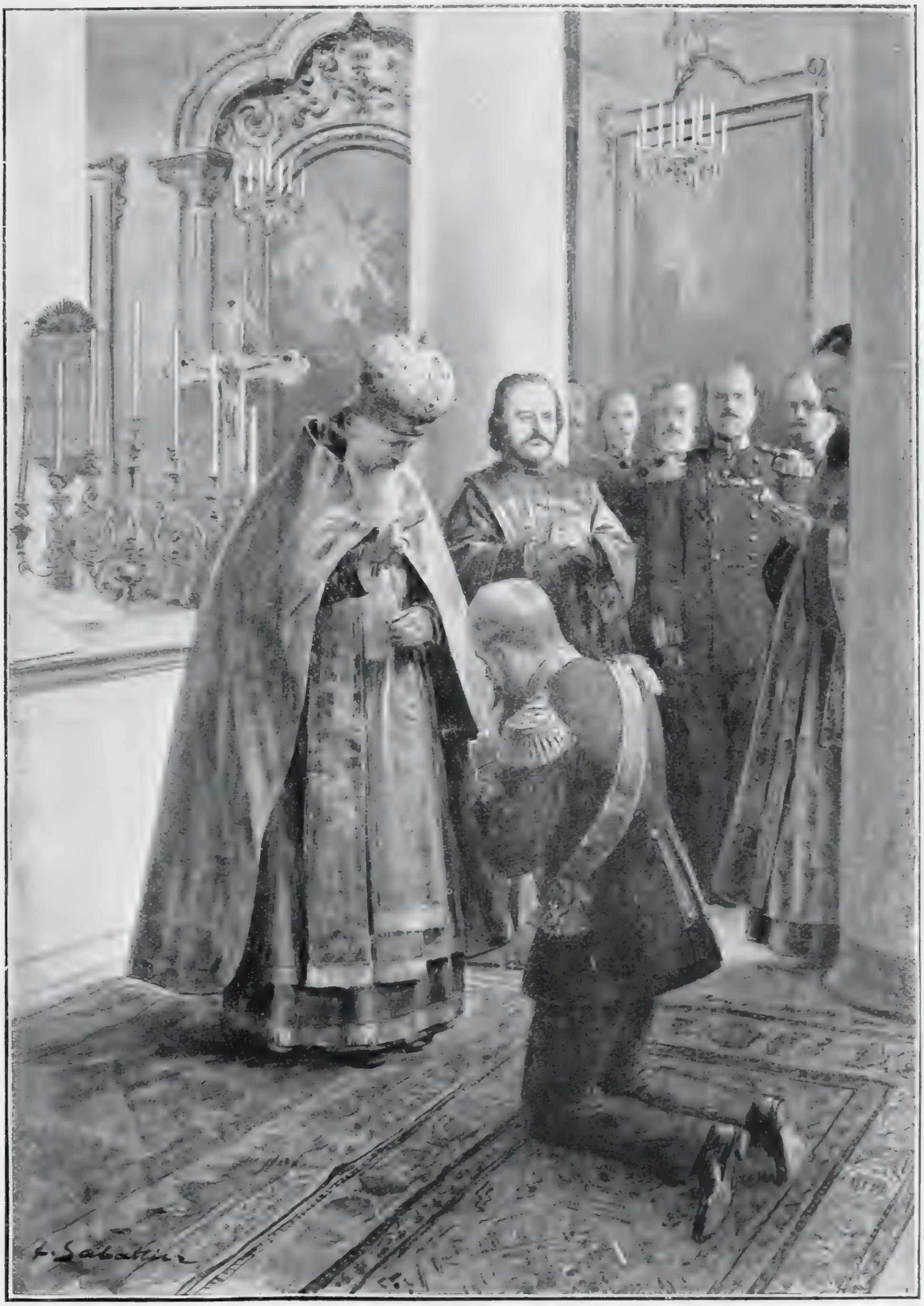
The state of Port Arthur after this fearful experience cannot but be one of mingled relief and stupefaction. Among the civilians the prevailing note is evidently one of profound depression; while, in spite of Admiral Makaroff's fine example, it can hardly be supposed that among the naval and military defenders the situation has produced any marked enthusiasm. Indeed, it is said that the soldiers are still accusing the sailors of incompetence and cowardice, notwithstanding the efforts which the latter have just been making to compensate the inglorious inactivity of their larger ships. For the authorities themselves the bombardment has brought fresh perplexities. There is no question that the damage done inside the harbour has been serious, some of the forts have suffered severely, while there is a naturally increasing shortage of ammunition which Admiral Makaroff duly represents with some urgency to Admiral Alexeieff, now at Mukden.

MR. J. A. R. GILCHRIST.

Luckily, there is now no imminent fear of starvation, for supplies are fairly plentiful, one or two steamers having succeeded in running the blockade, which the Japanese have been strictly maintaining, with cargoes of cattle. But the authorities have laid an embargo on all stores, and the daily rations which they issue are of such homœopathic proportions that considerable discontent on this score prevails.

One of the chief anxieties is in respect to espionage. Port Arthur is still evidently honeycombed with spies, and even during the bombardment four Chinese and two Japanese in disguise were caught in the act of signalling to the attacking fleet. These were promptly hanged, but the leakage of information is found to continue, and the Russian police are constantly pulling the pigtails of Chinese coolies on the chance that a Japanese spy may be thus discovered.

Many of the Chinese artificers have been so terrified by the late bombardment that they have made strenuous efforts to desert, but have been brought back, lashed together in gangs, and forced to work at the point of the bayonet. The task of repairing the *Retvisan* proves especially heavy, and is not lightened by the recent departure of the Scotch engineer, Mr. Gilchrist, who until lately has worked manfully for his Russian employers. He has, however, been so pestered by their constant surveillance that he has given up the work in disgust, and gone off to Niu-chwang, leaving only a solitary Englishman, a mining engineer named Simpson, to share the troubles and anxieties of the Port Arthur garrison.



FATHER JOHN OF CRONSTADT BLESSING ADMIRAL MAKAROFF ON HIS DEPARTURE TO SUCCEED ADMIRAL STARK AT PORT ARTHUR.

An important step taken by Admiral Makaroff, with an eye to future bombardments, is the mounting of three siege-guns on Golden Hill, at the lower extremity of the eastern entrance to Port Arthur. These will command that part of the sea from which the Japanese have in this last bombardment been firing with deadly effect.

But it is not only by sea that fresh attacks are apprehended, and some of the preparations now taken indicate the conviction that the Japanese will not delay much longer a land movement on a large scale against the fortress. Fresh earthworks have been thrown up, dynamite mines have been laid, and an elaborate system of barbed wire entanglements, similar to those so skilfully used against us by the Boers, has been constructed as a further aid to the land defences.

There is no doubt that Port Arthur is still a hard nut to crack, and the fresh heart which Admiral Makaroff has infused into the garrison, coupled with the arrival of fresh troops by the railway which is still running to Mukden, and thence to Harbin, and thence—a reflection in itself encouraging—to "Mighty Russia"—all this is a fine corrective to anything like despair. But the other side of the picture is a dreary one. Three heavy bombardments on the top of repeated torpedo attacks, each of which had left its mark on ships that might have rendered bombardment impossible; no sign of slackened vigilance on the part of the enemy; and no confident feeling of having caused that enemy any considerable loss. All these are grave reflections which this last manifestation of Japan's naval superiority cannot but intensify and tinge with something of gloomy presentiment.

RUSSIAN AMBULANCE WAGGON
(Showing method of carriage on a sledge during winter).

Photo: The Topical Press Photo Agency.

JAPANESE OFFICER RECONNOITRING.

CHAPTER X.

THE FOG OF WAR—PREPARATIONS FOR A LAND CAMPAIGN—STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS—HARBIN AND LIAO-YANG—A COMPLEX SITUATION—SOME MILITARY PERSONALITIES.

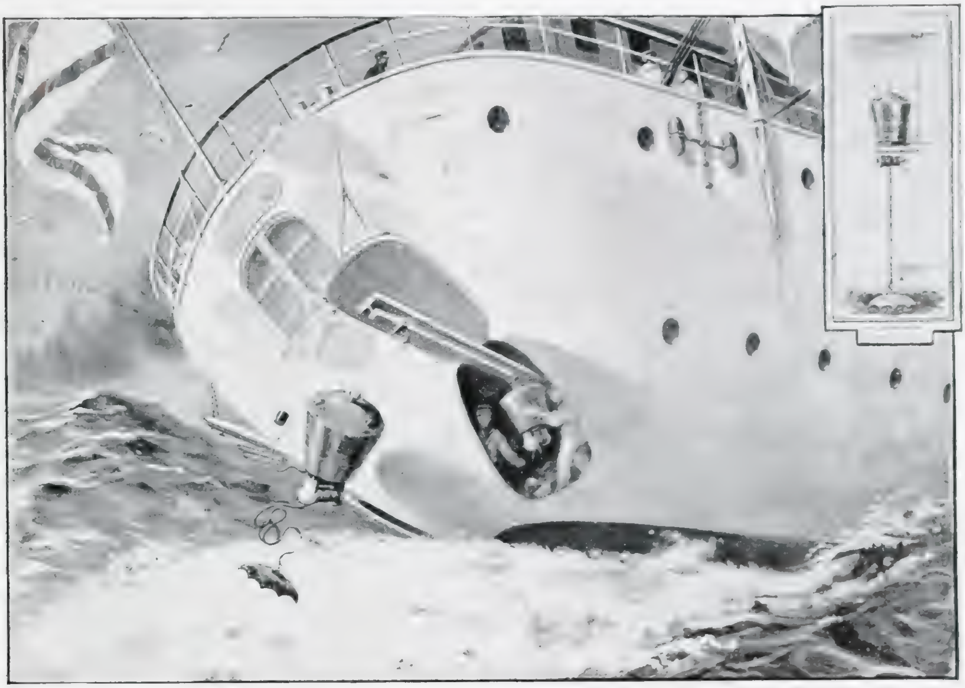
IT is now the third week in March, and the curtain is about to rise on a new act in the great war drama of the Far East. Seldom, if ever before has such complete mystery enshrouded the imminent possibilities of an important campaign; seldom have expert students of military history been more at a loss to discover indications calculated seriously to confirm or refute this or that ingenious theory as to the next move in the game. Japan is known to be on the point of commencing operations by land which can hardly be less impressive than those which she has already carried out by sea. But, up to this point, the " fog of war " is over those operations, a fog which even the most enterprising and painstaking of " war specials " has no chance of dissipating. Presently the fog will lift, and all will be clear as on a summer noon. But no history will ever faithfully reproduce the earlier phases of the Russo-Japanese War if it does not take note of the obscurity in which the opening of the land campaign was for weeks successfully enveloped.

That obscurity was the more astonishing by reason of the intense keenness that existed in non-combatant Europe to dispel it. Never had the Press of the West made more strenuous endeavours, or displayed greater enterprise, with a view to the speedy and continuous record of every movement, more particularly of the opposing forces by land. Despatch-boats, and even wireless telegraphy, had been pressed into the service of special correspondents, and nothing that forethought could suggest or money procure was wanting to provide the reader of, at any rate, the English newspapers with as early and accurate tidings of the war as he has of a railway accident in Scotland or a meeting of the London County Council. Yet, for a time sufficient to produce in Europe a lively feeling of impatience, Japan completely muzzled the "war specials" by the institution of a censorship of unexampled severity, and quietly left the remainder of the civilised world to indulge in vague fancies and baffling speculations. In few respects may the Japanese be said to have profited more conspicuously by the lessons of latter-day war than in the amazingly successful secrecy with which they surrounded their plan of campaign by land during the first six weeks after the outbreak of hostilities.

Japan had, of course, everything in its favour to this end. In the first place, an island nation has an obvious advantage in this respect over a continental country in which details of mobilisation and many other instructive hints can be carried over land frontiers by more or less casual observers. In Japan, as soon as war was declared, it was not difficult to render leakage well-nigh impossible, except through black treachery, and we may be sure that, where ordinary restrictions failed, surveillance of the most skilful sort stopped all but the minutest gaps. The possession of the Command of the Sea enabled Japan to move freely in her own waters without fear of being watched to an embarrassing extent, while the natural reserve of the Japanese character, coupled with an unquestioned tendency to craftiness, contributed at times to the production of views and forecasts utterly bewildering in their apparent air of authority and actual baselessness.

It is necessary here to find room for a few words of retrospect. For, although in some respects no serious change seems to be perceptible since we "took stock" at the end of the first week of war, the actualities are altogether different. Japan has not been idle. She has added two powerful cruisers—battleships one may almost call them—to her Fleet; she has maintained a strict blockade of Port Arthur, has caused further damage to the Russian ships there by torpedo attacks, has severely bombarded the place, and also bombarded Vladivostok; and, as we shall see presently, she has, to the knowledge even of Europe, acquired a masterly grip of Korea. Russia, on the other hand, has kept the Siberian Railway open, and has sent out to the Far East a steady stream of reinforcements. The Vladivostok squadron has apparently eluded the observation of the Japanese cruisers, and its whereabouts are to the outside world altogether uncertain. Port Arthur has been galvanised into fresh activity by the substitution of Admiral Makaroff for Admiral Stark; several of the damaged Russian warships have been repaired, and the Russian torpedo craft have begun to show some initiative. On the whole, it would be rash to say whether in the five weeks which have elapsed since, say, the sinking of the *Yenisei* in Dalny Bay, the *recorded* points in favour of the two combatants are seriously unequal.

The preparations for land operations elsewhere than in Korea, which Japan has made under cover of an impenetrable veil of secrecy, may be all to her credit. This remains to be seen. Certainly, the secrecy itself, and the uncertainty created by it, are advantages of some worth. But there are two other considerations which at this stage of the war are of singular interest. One is the fact that, as far as can be conjectured, Japan's own estimate of the early course of the war has been doubtfully justified. Probably she never dreamed of being able to secure such results as the first week showed in less than a month, and yet she may have hoped to have accomplished in six weeks more than she actually has done, in the way of crippling the enemy's ships beyond repair, perhaps even of adding some of them to her own fleet. The security of the Vladivostok squadron cannot but be a little disconcerting; and Port Arthur is proving, perhaps, rather a harder nut to crack than Japan may have fancied would be the case. The Command of the Sea is a priceless asset, but, beyond assisting the landings in Korea, it has not hitherto been of paramount advantage, nor will it be until the ice disappears all along the coast-line.



THE *YENISEI* LAYING A SUBMARINE MINE.

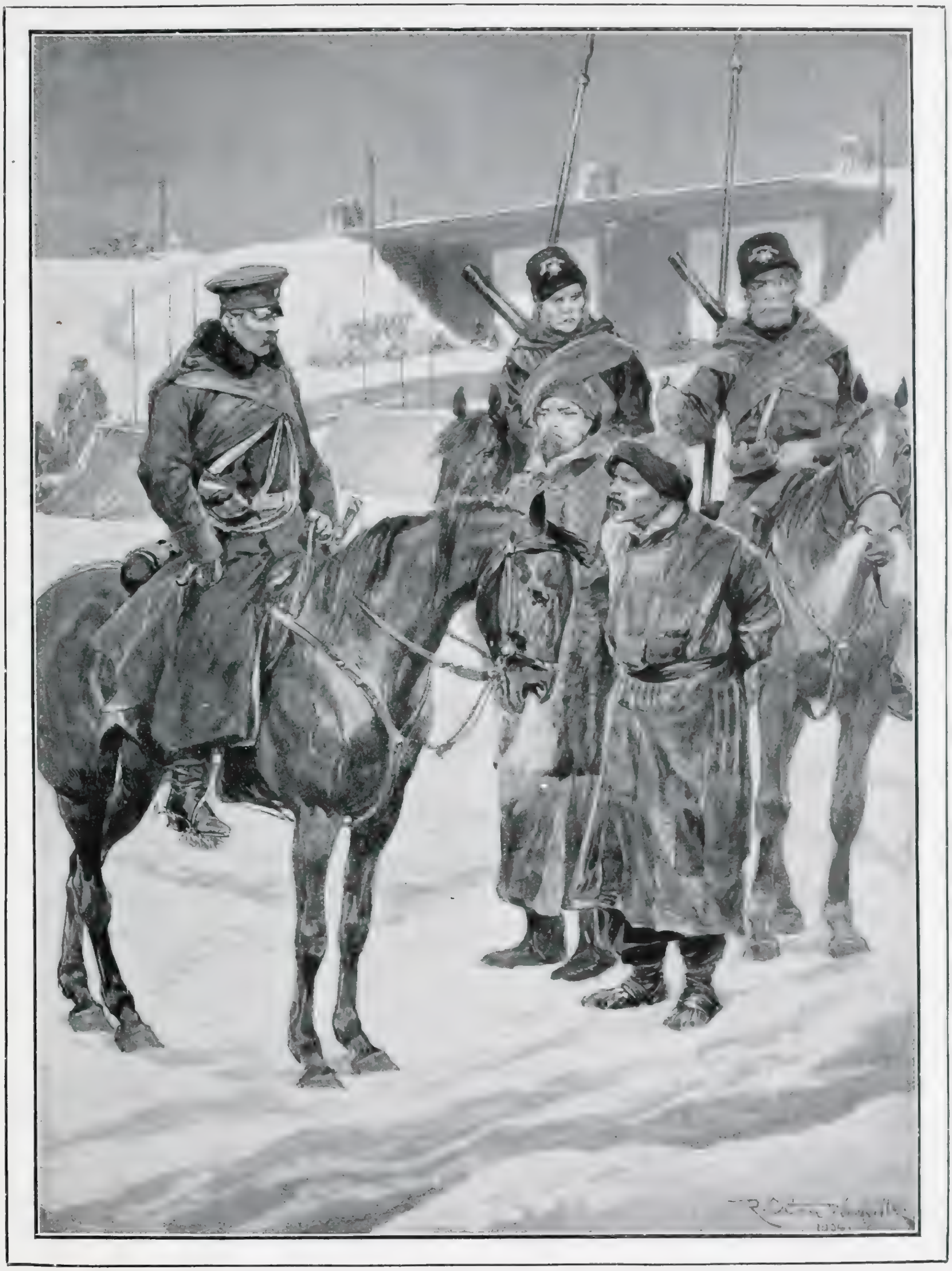
In a word, Japan's early successes themselves may have thrown out her calculations somewhat, if only by making Russia far more cautious in her naval movements, and so postponing, perhaps indefinitely, a decisive fleet action.

What might have suited Japan far better than the present condition of affairs would have been one or two naval actions of first-rate importance, in which the superior quality of the Japanese battleships and cruisers would have been effectively demonstrated. Six weeks would have been well spent if, after some such vigorous trial of strength, Japan could have proceeded to the execution of her plans for a land campaign, convinced that Russia would not again seek to question her enemy's complete supremacy at sea, at any rate for many months.

Possibly even more upsetting has been Russia's success in keeping open the Siberian Railway. Probably not one critic in ten who studied the prospects of the war before it actually broke out expected that the line of communication between Moscow and Harbin would remain unsevered for six weeks. Nor is it to be doubted that the Japanese confidently anticipated an early interruption. The attempts on the Sungari Bridge and on the great bridge over the Volga seemed to show that deliberate designs to this end must have been formed, while the rumour that the raids of the Chunchuses have owed something to Japanese instigation and leadership has never been denied. But, whatever ground there may be for these and similar suggestions, the fact remains that in this third week of March to which we are more particularly referring, the Siberian Railway is still at work, carrying not only troops, but stores and munitions of war, to Harbin.

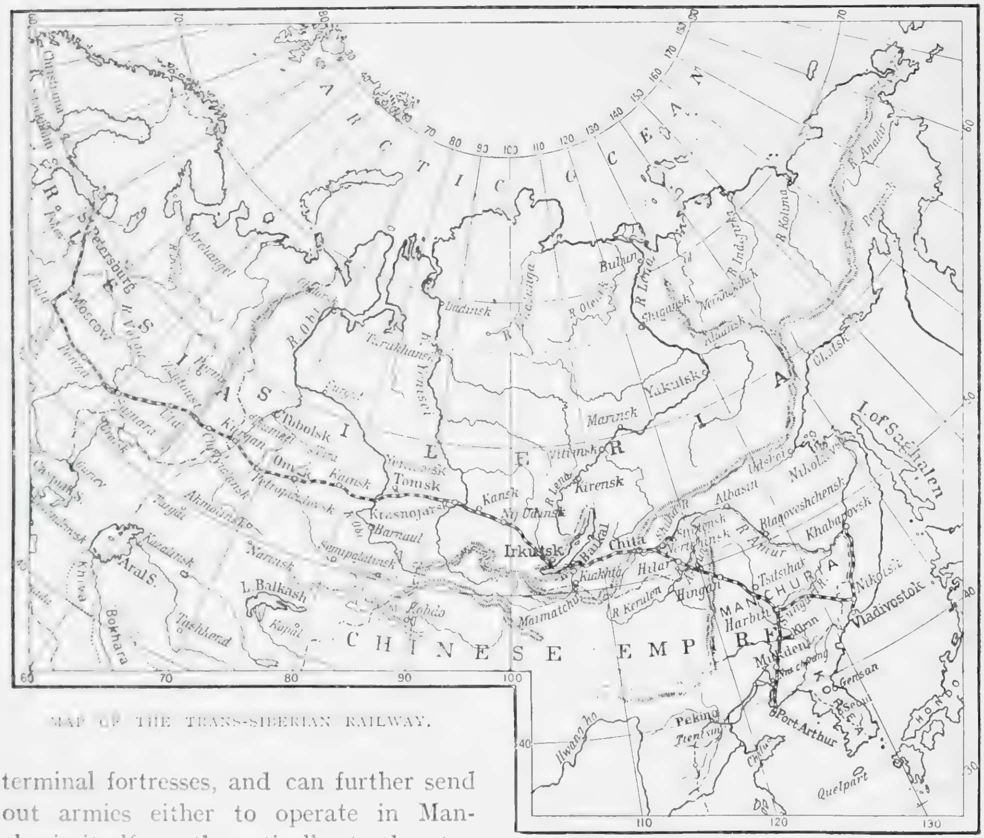
The mention of the name of Harbin in this connection makes an easy steppingstone to a brief review of the strategical problem which at this point presents itself to Japan, and in the consideration of which Harbin, as we shall see, is a very significant factor. Let us study the map carefully, and endeavour to comprehend, at any rate, the chief elements of a very interesting military situation. Harbin, as there has been previous occasion to mention, is the great junction at which the Siberian, or rather, as it is here, the Manchurian Railway bifurcates to Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The word "bifurcates" is used advisedly, because in military geography we often have to take very serious note of two- or three-pronged forks in the shape of communications, and the more closely we study our war map in this instance the more numerous significant forks of this sort we shall discover. Later on, we have to deal with a very big two-pronged fork indeed, the handle of which is the Siberian Railway to a point a little east of Chita, one prong being the continuation of the railway to Harbin and thence to Vladivostok, the other the great Amur River which runs by Blagoveshchensk to Khabarovsk, where two fresh "splayed-out" prongs occur, one the continuation of the Amur to Nicolaievsk, the other the Ussuri Railway to Vladivostok. But now we are chiefly concerned with the fork which at Harbin has two prongs of rail to Vladivostok and Port Arthur, and, it may now be added, a third prong in the shape of the Sungari River, which flows to Khabarovsk and there joins the Amur.

The importance of Harbin, more especially now, when the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur can no longer seriously dispute the supremacy of the sea with Japan, is obvious. As a local base of operations it has the clear disadvantage of being fed by a single line of vulnerable rail; but hitherto, as we have seen, that line has



ARREST OF JAPANESE SPIES DISGUISED AS COOLIES.

been kept open, and we have at present no right to assume that future interruption will take place. Here, then, in the heart of Manchuria, we have a great military centre, from which Russia can feed with men and stores both her great terminal fortresses, and can further send out armies either to operate in Manchuria itself, or, theoretically, to threaten Korea. One has to say "theoretically" in this instance because, practically speaking, Russia is not at this moment in a position to threaten Korea; and is, in fact, adopting a very different attitude towards the Belgium of the Far East.


ARCTIC OCEAN
RUSSIA
SIBERIA
CHINESE EMPIRE
MANCHURIA
KOREA
St. Petersburg
Moscow
Archangel
Samara
Ufa
Zlatoust
Kurgan
Omsk
Tobolsk
Tomsk
Kansk
Krasnojarsk
Barnaul
Irkutsk
Baikal
Chita
Kirensk
Yakutsk
Verkhoyansk
Ochotsk
I. of Saghalien
Blagoveshchensk
Khabarovsk
Nikolsk
Vladivostok
Harbin
Kirin
Mukden
Port Arthur
Seoul
Gensan
Peking
Tientsin
Quelpart
L. Balkash
Aral S.
Tashkend
Bokhara
Khiva
R. Amur
R. Lena
R. Obi
R. Yenisei
R. Volga
Hoang ho

MAP OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

Harbin is one of the industrial wonders of the world, and it is said that even the Russians who created it are utterly surprised at its astounding progress. Mr. John Foster Fraser, who visited it in 1901, described it as "for all the world like a 'boom' American town." It had then sprung into existence in a few years, big stores and hotels were being pushed up, and, since the place was a magnet to all the adventurers in Russia, its resident population was a very mixed one, and murders averaged two or three a week. Shortly before the commencement of the war Harbin had some 30,000 inhabitants distributed between Old Harbin (the Chinese town), New Harbin (the Russian city), and Harbin Quay, a line of wharves and workshops along the Sungari River, which is here about twice

Photo. Mr. J. Foster Fraser.

COSSACK TYPES.

as broad as the Thames at London Bridge. Since the outbreak of hostilities we may be sure that the aspect of Harbin has changed considerably. It is quite possible that the theatres, public gardens, and hotels are still moderately thronged; but, with a thousand or more fresh troops arriving from Russia every day, and growing apprehensions as to the capacity of Port Arthur and Vladivostok to hold out against repeated attacks, with, above all, the certainty that almost immediately the Japanese will effect fresh landings, possibly at highly inconvenient points—with all these distractions Harbin has other things to attend to besides amusement. Temporary barracks have to be run up to accommodate troops, stores must be forwarded, supplies reckoned and husbanded against the "rainy day" which may occur at short notice if there are hitches on the line from Russia. Apart from all this, we may surely take it that Admiral Alexeieff is looking ahead and surrounding this vital spot with a system of entrenchments suited to the case. A few months ago, perhaps, no thought was farther from the mind of the average Russian than that the Japanese would ever succeed in making their way to Harbin, but the war has already produced such painful surprises that many possibilities are now admitted which would have been scouted two months ago as wholly ridiculous. Moreover, the Russians will not have forgotten that during the Boxer troubles the Russian garrison at Harbin was closely besieged, and, although the Harbin of to-day is very different, the contingency of Chinese pressure on a place so well worth the looting is hardly to be disregarded.

With Harbin duly strengthened, Russia possesses a centre in Manchuria towards which, as the ice begins to show signs of breaking up along the coasts, Japan must be casting many an anxious glance.

Photo: Topical Press Photo Agency.

RUSSIAN MILITARY POLICE IN MANCHURIA.

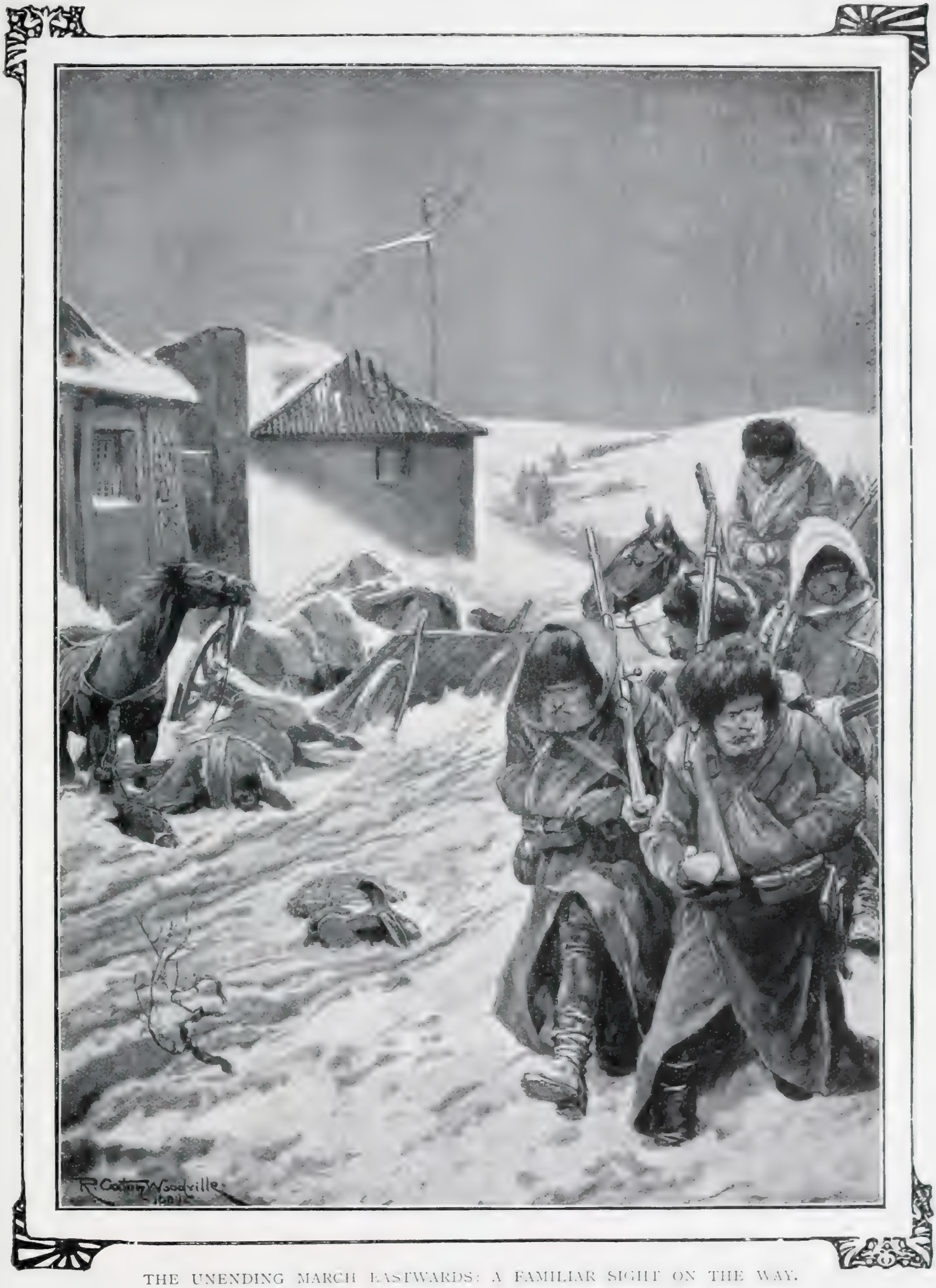
But long before she can hope to grasp the handle of that particular strategical fork there are subsidiary prongs to be dealt with, for Russia's methods of getting at the inside of the Manchurian pie have been singularly searching and comprehensive. We need not go into the matter at all deeply or technically—the niceties of strategy would be out of place in a work of this character—and in this chapter we shall only touch the fringe of Korea, which demands, and will receive, separate treatment. But the attentive reader must be asked to take note at this point of Liao-yang, some fifty miles to the south of Mukden on the line from Harbin to Port Arthur. Here in reality we have another "fork," although in boldly outlined maps the fact may not be apparent. One prong, of course, is the continuation of the line to Port Arthur, the other a road which runs over the formidable Motien Pass to Antung, at the mouth of the Yalu River.

At the end of the third week of March it is understood that General Linievitch is at Liao-yang with a considerable force, aggregating, it may be, some 50,000 of all arms. How many more there are at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, on the Yalu, and at Harbin is quite uncertain, but for the purposes of this chapter such knowledge is not urgently needed. What is sought is to convey a general sketch of the position which, broadly speaking, Russia is now holding with a view to a possible advance of the Japanese by land.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL LINIEVITCH.

It would be difficult to explain this more simply than by accentuating the importance of Harbin and Liao-yang, from the former of which Russia is linked up with both Port Arthur and Vladivostok as long as those two fortresses remain in her possession; while from the latter a force can be detached either to dispute a Japanese landing at Niu-chwang or elsewhere in the Liao-tung Peninsula, or to support the Russian troops on the banks of the Yalu. To the reader who will take the small trouble required to grasp the elementary facts herein involved with the aid of a map, much of the following narrative will be simplified. For, whatever modifications may occur in the plans of either side, it is impossible to alter the present significance of the places named from the standpoint of military geography.

Incidentally, one can hardly be surprised at the satisfaction expressed by Russian military critics at this stage, as


R. Caton Woodville 1904

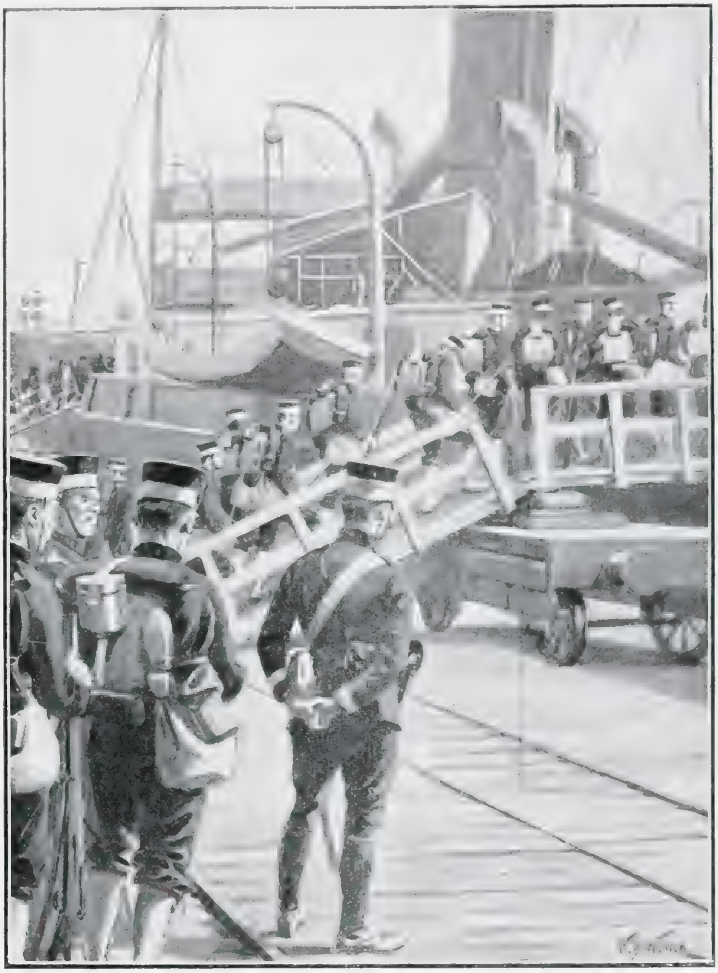
THE UNENDING MARCH EASTWARDS: A FAMILIAR SIGHT ON THE WAY.

day after day passes without any recorded Japanese attempt at disembarkation on a large scale elsewhere than in Korea. For every twenty-four hours mean the arrival of another batch of troops from Russia, accompanied by a certain quantity of stores, and in these days when the spade is hardly a less important military weapon than the rifle and sword, an extra week's work in the construction of entrenchments may mean great things in a later phase of the campaign.

It would be, of course, extraordinarily interesting if we could now flit over to the side of Japan and ascertain the exact view she takes of the strategical situation of which the above is the sketchiest possible outline. But, even if a year hence a careful study of all the circumstances of the case enables us to gauge pretty accurately how the matter stood at this particular moment, the wisdom which comes after an event may be no sure guide to the shaping of Japanese military counsels at such a critical juncture. When a country goes to war by land and sea simultaneously, considerations arise which may make it essential for that country to have three or four alternative plans, any one of which is liable to sudden and serious modification by the failure of either the land or sea force to accomplish all that is expected of it. With the Russians, who are acting at present on the defensive, and acting only half-heartedly at sea, the case is different, and the course much clearer. But Japan, however resolute, however anxious to adhere to one direct plan of campaign, is faced by a very complex problem, to the solution of which her naval successes have not carried her as far as might perhaps have been expected from all that has been written and talked in the last few years as to the advantages of the Command of the Sea.

The one thing she can, with complete confidence, hope to do is to carry a large force to any point of the coast from which she may wish to operate without fear of interruption *en route*. In the first place she has the men. Apart from the force she has already despatched to Korea, she has probably at least 150,000 Regular troops which are in perfect readiness for work, admirably armed and equipped, and behind these are at least another quarter of a million men who can be more or less effectively put into the field if necessary. Her transport facilities are exceptional, for she has the splendid vessels of a great steamship line to fall back upon in this respect. Her Navy can afford not only to render it almost impossible for Russian ships to waylay her transports, but also to assist disembarkations. But beyond this Japan cannot go with any certainty. She may be able to effect a landing, or several landings, with comparative ease, and subsequently her troops may cover themselves with as much glory as her ships have done. But from the moment she commits herself to an advance on land an altogether new set of conditions will come into force, and we may be very sure that this fact is nowhere more clearly realised than at Tokio.

Some idea of the complexity of the problem which lies before Japan at this moment may be set forth in a few words, which will be rendered all the fewer and simpler by the account already given of the Russian position. In the first place it is clear that until the Siberian Railway is cut the Russians can continue to pour troops into Harbin until a military strength is attained with which Japan can hardly expect to cope except on the defensive, and only then at very great cost to herself. For Korea must be held at all costs, and Russia may be far better able six months hence to afford a couple of hundred thousand troops for the invasion of the Hermit Kingdom than Japan will be able to afford half the number for its protection. If Japan could march straight upon Harbin, beat the Russians there, and then pull up the railway for some hundreds of miles, she might be able to make terms which would realise all the aims she had in view when she entered upon this great war. But, while it is generally an excellent thing to make an enemy's capital—as Harbin in the present to all practical intents and purposes is—a main objective, fortresses and large mobile forces must not be neglected, and with Port Arthur and Vladivostok yet to fall, and, perhaps, 50,000 or more



JAPANESE TROOPS EMBARKING AT KOBE

Russians at Liao-yang, an advance on Harbin, even supposing such a bold step were not hindered by other obstacles, would have to be accompanied by other precautions, such as the isolation of the fortresses and adequate pressure on the Liao-yang position.

The alternative most favoured by European observers at this stage is a concentrated effort to capture Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and to hold these and Korea against Russia in the confident hope that the blow thus administered to Russian prestige will be sufficient to bring about a lasting settlement of the points in dispute as regards Korea and Manchuria. To this suggested line of action the obvious objection is its possible lack of finality; but one can readily understand how in any case the idea of regaining possession of Port Arthur appeals to Japan as a primary aim, and how little likely she is at this point to commit herself to land operations in which this is not an essential feature.

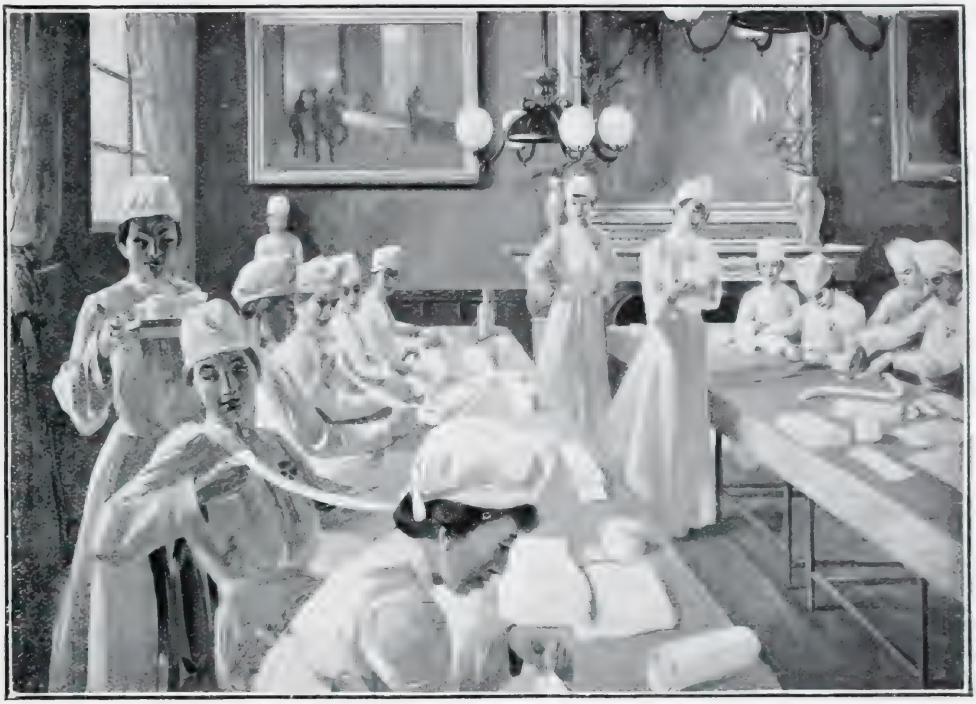
Such in brief is the condition of affairs at the outset of the military operations, outside Korea, to which we shall shortly give individual attention. There are, of course, a number of other subsidiary considerations which have to be taken into account in reckoning the pros and cons of the strategical situation. The nature of the country and the extent to which it can furnish any sort of supplies are, it goes without saying, matters of first-class importance in this connection from the purely military standpoint; but this is not a purely military history, and accordingly these and other similar features will be more particularly discussed in connection with the actual operations themselves.

What appears a more convenient object of attentive study at this point is the military talent available on either side. Here again much may be left to be revealed by actual experience. But there are one or two extremely interesting personalities, Russian and Japanese, to which a few "forewords" may usefully be devoted, in the full confidence that at one time or another some mention of these distinguished and capable leaders will be necessary in circumstances perhaps not favourable for a halt for the purpose of dwelling on personal characteristics.

On the Russian side allusion has already been made to General Kuropatkin and his Chief of the Staff, Lieutenant-General Gilinski. Of another leading Russian General, the great Grodekoff, it is inexpedient to say more at present than that he is being regarded as a sort of reserve force in connection with a situation which, as Governor of Eastern Siberia, with headquarters at Khabarovsk, he may have at least assisted in creating.

But a few words must be given to General Linievitch, who is now sixty-six years of age, and who won a reputation as a gallant fighting officer as far back as the Crimean War. In the war with Turkey in 1877 he was severely wounded, but he recovered sufficiently to distinguish himself considerably in 1878 by forcing the River Kiutrischi in the teeth of strong opposition, with the result that the Turks, after a vigorous counter-attack, were compelled to retire. In 1894 General Linievitch commanded the Russian forces in the Far East, and was present when the international expedition for the relief of the Legations entered Peking. It is an interesting historical fact that the first sovereign to wire the

Russian Commander-in-Chief his congratulations was the Mikado of Japan, by whom General Linievitch has been decorated with the highest Japanese order.



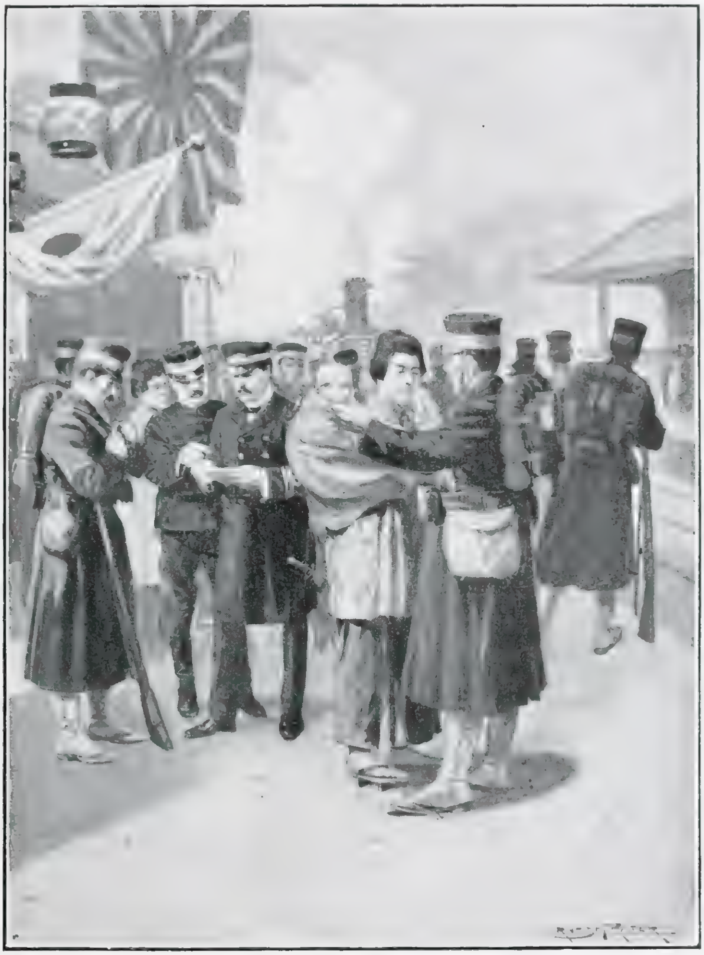
THE RED CROSS IN THE FAR EAST: JAPANESE LADIES MAKING LINT AND BANDAGES IN THE HOUSE OF PRINCESS KOMATSU.

Another Russian leader of great prominence is Major-General Sterpetski, who has been commanding in Southern Manchuria since the Boxer risings of 1900. Here is an interesting portrait of this officer by Mr. Angus Hamilton, the well-known authority on Korea, and, indeed, all Far Eastern matters. "Sterpetski is eminently a soldier. Almost a child of nature in the simplicity of his character, he is loyal to his country, self-centred in his interests, and determined to maintain them at any cost. As a leader in the field, his exertions in the past four years in Manchuria show that he expects his soldiers to undertake nothing which he himself also cannot do. He is, therefore, beloved by his men, in whom he trusts implicitly, and upon whom hitherto he has relied without fail. He has been responsible for peace and order in Manchuria from the beginning of the Boxer crisis, since which time his force, engaged in continuous active service, has been unspared. Equally, however, he has not spared himself, and, swift to strike in the hour of his raids, terrible in his reprisals, energetic and determined in his efforts to crush the disturbance as he was, there has been no moment when he would not have been found encouraging his comrades from the very front of his columns. He is middle-aged, stout, and short in stature. He is unmarried, and he has spent his whole life within the lines of his camps, the companion of his soldiers, the diligent student of the art and practice of war."

Another interesting personality on the Russian side is that of Lieutenant-General Smirnoff, who is designated as the successor of General Stoessel, the Commandant at Port Arthur. General Smirnoff is reputed to be one of the best tacticians in the Russian Army, but he is also a first-rate fighting soldier, and his breast sparkles with fourteen decorations, several of them gained in the Russo-Turkish War, in which he won great distinction. Funnily enough, his name signifies "meek" or "peaceful," but his nickname in the Russian Army, a reminiscence of his exploits against the Turks, is "Seven Devils!" General Smirnoff is a man of fifty; he has commanded both a regiment and a brigade, and was formerly Fort Commandant at Warsaw.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GILINSKI.

Other prominent Russian generals are Major-General Velitcho, the military engineer, who is described as "practical, experienced, and independent," and who, having served on Kuropatkin's staff at the War Office, will doubtless be actively employed at one stage or another of the operations; Major-Generals Krondratkenko and Artamanoff, commanding the Siberian Rifle Brigades; and Prince Louis Napoleon, who has been entrusted with an important cavalry command.



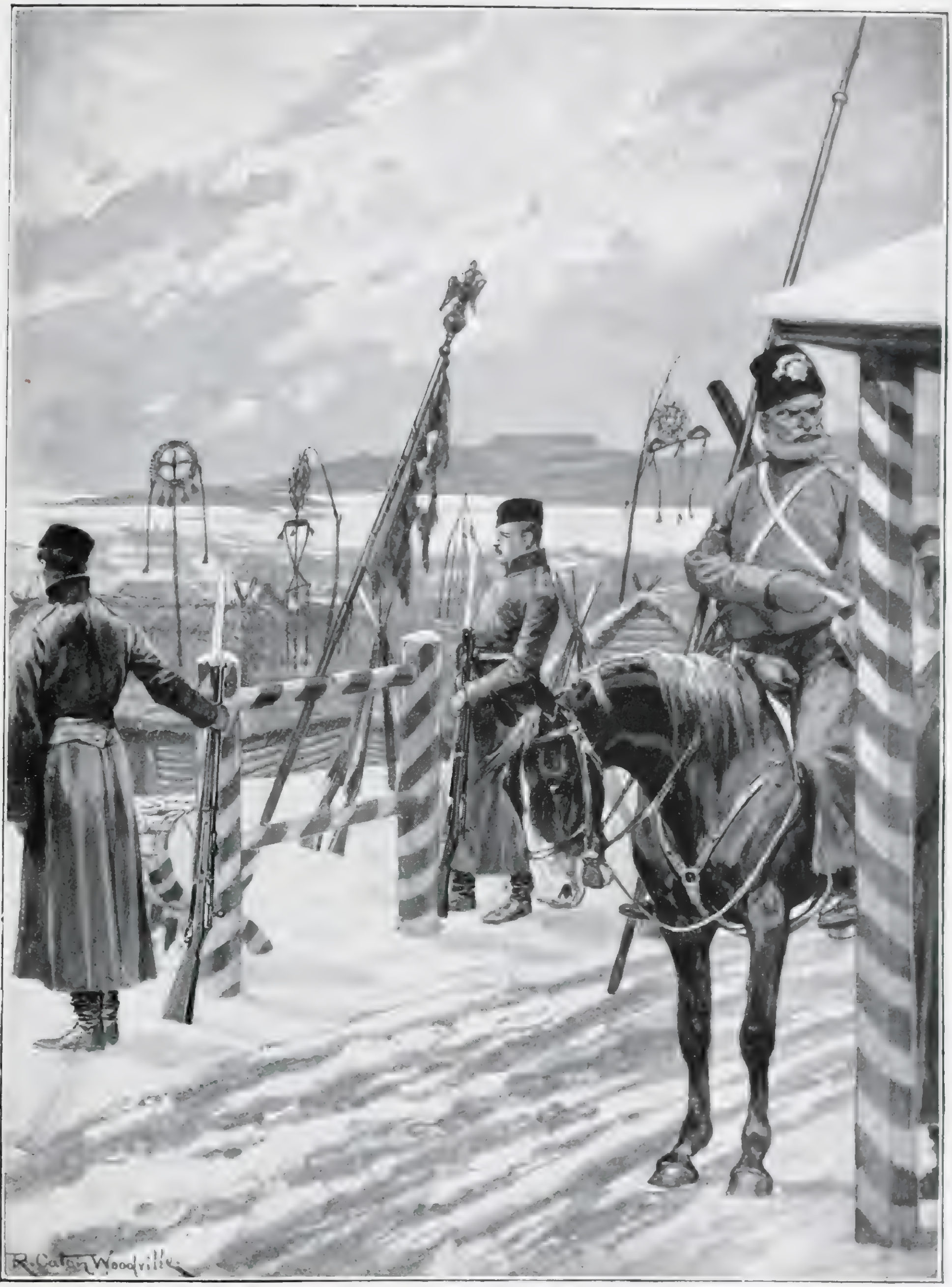
JAPANESE TROOPS LEAVING TOKIO.

Of the Japanese generals by far the most famous is the veteran Field-Marshal Marquis Yamagata, now about seventy years of age, who, even if he does not leave Japan for the seat of war, will undoubtedly be largely consulted in all that relates to the conduct of the campaign. Field-Marshal Yamagata commanded the Japanese Army in the war with China, and is now Chief of the War Council. He is described as the Moltke of Japan, and during the operations in Korea in 1894-5 he attracted the special notice of military students in Europe by his successful use of the principle of converging columns—in other words, forces started from separate points and meeting "in the nick of time" to confuse and overwhelm an enemy. The stock example of this in European history is the battle of Königgrätz or, as some call it, Sadowa, and mention of the subject here seems appropriate in view of the probability that further examples of the same class of operation may be forthcoming in this campaign.

FIELD-MARSHAL MARQUIS YAMAGATA.

Field-Marshal Count Oyama, another famous commander in the war with China, the leader of the "Second Army of Japan," and "the man who took Port Arthur," is described as tall, stout, and of a very quiet, gentle, and amiable disposition, having no real fondness for war, in spite of his military successes. He is nearly sixty-one. General Nozu, who is by many of the Japanese regarded as their greatest soldier, is about the same age. He is a keen sportsman, and has been in his time a noted wrestler. He has a fine reputation for courage and daring, and in the war with China accomplished a notable feat by the capture of Ping-yang, in the teeth of a desperate resistance by the pick of the Chinese troops, in a single day.

Generals Kuroki and Oku stand high in the Japanese military hierarchy; but it is expected that equal if not greater prominence will be given in this campaign to General Baron Kodama, who has been called the Kitchener of Japan, and whose chief characteristic is said to be "the electric rapidity with which he thinks and decides." He is a little over fifty, and is considered the best tactician in the Japanese Army.



A COSSACK STATION IN MANCHURIA WITH TRIBAL SIGNS OVER THE MEN'S HUTS.

(In addition to the curious tribal signs, the picture contains several interesting military symbols. The flag-rest denotes the house of the Commandant and Headquarters Staff. All Russian Government property is painted black and white stripes.)

Lieutenant-General Yamaguchi also enters on the war with an excellent reputation, having commanded the Japanese forces in China during the Boxer troubles and the advance to Peking.

These are the more conspicuous of the generals on both sides with reputations to lose or to enhance. It is safe to prophesy, however, that other names as yet obscure or unknown will leap into celebrity before the war is many months old.

FIELD-MARSHAL COUNT OYAMA.

CHAPTER XI.

KOREA—AN INDOLENT PEOPLE—JAPAN THE AWAKENER—FIRST MILITARY STEPS—FROM SEOUL TO PING-YANG—TO THE SOUTH OF THE YALU—FIRST SHOTS ON LAND.

IN his introduction to this narrative Mr. Diósy gave a brief but pertinent explanation of the connection of Korea with the outbreak of war between Russia and Japan. He pointed out that, apart from the geographical position of Korea, which makes it, in the picturesque Japanese phraseology, "an arrow pointing at Japan's heart," the Island Nation had created for itself in the Korean Empire industrial and commercial interests which would alone entitle it to predominance in that quarter. The present conflict was only just commencing when Mr. Diósy wrote those words. Their complete justification is only to be found in the war itself. The history of the negotiations showed that the importance attached by Japan to the Korean question was altogether different from the view which her Government, at any rate, took of the Russian occupation of Manchuria. But the matter stands in a still clearer light as we begin to examine the earnest, whole-hearted fashion in which, from the outset of the actual war, Japan set Korea in the forefront of her aims and obligations, and demonstrated to the world at large her fixed resolve to keep the "Hermit Kingdom" for ever out of reach of the claws of the Russian Bear.

A great deal has happened since, on February 8th, the first shot of the war was fired by the *Korietz* outside Chemulpo harbour, an episode followed the same evening by the landing of Japanese troops, of which a brief description was given in Chapter II. Chemulpo has now relapsed into comparative obscurity, and there is little except the sunken *Varyag*, which endeavours are being made to raise, to recall the lurid happenings of that eventful week. The military interest in Korea has shifted to the north of the peninsula; and even Seoul, the capital, with its evidences of "progress" in the shape of gas-lamps and an electric tramway, its resident Emperor, and its variegated intrigues, is but of mild attractiveness compared with Ping-yang and the banks of the Yalu. But we must not be in too great a hurry to transport ourselves to those centres of greater activity. For, if we are rightly to understand the significance of the operations which the Japanese Army is carrying out within easy reach of the frontier that divides Korea from Manchuria, we should at least have a general idea of the broad lines of policy on which Japan is proceeding as regards this curious country, and of the very practical steps she is taking to consolidate a rather difficult and delicate position.

Undoubtedly the Koreans do not love the Japanese, in spite of all that Japan has done for them. They may respect, and they certainly fear, the go-ahead, vigorous nation which dealt China such a slashing blow in 1894, and is now trying conclusions with Russia herself; but there is no love lost between the two peoples, and the Korean has very little wish to be "improved" out of the state of sloth and corruption in which he has wallowed for centuries. His mountainous country may teem with mineral wealth, and other new means may be indicated to him of rising to distinction and affluence, but he recks little of any prospect likely to need energy or industry for its realisation. "The prevailing impression in the country and among the people is one of intense inertia, an absolute lack of interest in anything, coupled with a strong distaste for novelty," writes Mr. Clive Bigham, who marched from Vladivostok along the coast to Gensan, and thence across the peninsula to Seoul, and so speaks with some authority. In the country districts the national indolence is fostered by the ease with which a livelihood can be obtained; in the towns corruption flourishes; but nowhere, except among the foreigners, is there any competition, any desire for further knowledge, any strenuous idea of life and duty.

Japan, of course, was well aware of all this when she threw down the gauntlet to her giant adversary, and prepared to shed the last drop of her blood rather than let Korea become simply an outlying province of Russia. She knew that in her self-imposed task she would get no real assistance from the lazy Koreans, and might, further, have to deal with troublesome political opposition in the Korean capital. For, at the commencement of the war, a number of foreigners were occupying advisory posts in connection with the administration, and draining the Korean exchequer to the extent of nearly £20,000 a year. The situation was complicated by the exist-

By permission, from "Koreans at Home."

PALACE GUARD, SEOUL.

ence of a Korean "army" of 15,000 badly armed and utterly inefficient soldiers, often a source of positive alarm to the peace-loving inhabitants. Lastly, Korea, before the war broke out, had intimated its intention to preserve neutrality in any conflict between Russia and Japan, a proposition fraught with all sorts of doubtful possibilities. Indeed, it is suggested that at one time, smarting under its early reverses, Russia threatened to take a very serious view of the apparent violation of this neutrality, in the hope, it is said, of embroiling France and Great Britain; and it is quite probable that the secret history of the diplomatic embarrassment thus produced would make very interesting reading.

We need not, however, concern ourselves too closely with the "might-have-beens" of this situation. The point, so far as this narrative is concerned, is that Japan paved the way for her military operations in the north of Korea by entering, shortly after war was declared, into a treaty with that country which amounted to a virtual protectorate. Subsequently, by the despatch of the Marquis Ito as Envoy to Seoul, a better personal understanding with the Emperor of Korea was established, and the groundwork laid for a number of administrative reforms.

We have seen how, literally, the first warlike act of the Japanese, after the rupture of diplomatic relations with Russia, was to despatch some thousands of troops to Chemulpo, and thence to Seoul. By this means a grip on the Korean capital was gained which was never afterwards released. The subsequent withdrawal of the Russian minister in consequence of the new relations between Korea and Japan, and further landings of troops at different points, brought into stronger relief Japan's determination both to oust Russian influence from Seoul and to secure the peninsula from invasion. With particular energy and forethought the construction of the railway from Seoul to Fusan at the south-eastern extremity of the peninsula was pushed forward, and a little later three thousand military engineers, under command of a major-general, were set to work on another light railway designed to run northwards from Seoul to Wi-ju on the banks of the Yalu.

One can have nothing but feelings of admiration for the extraordinary vigour

KOREAN CIVIL OFFICERS.

and long-headedness which characterised these proceedings. Knowing, as they do, every inch of Korea, we might have supposed that the Japanese would rest content with the advantage which this topographical knowledge gave them in their military operations in this country. There are older nations, again, which, in similar circumstances, would have simply treated Korea as, for the time being, a subject state, and taken good care not to be troubled by defects in its existing civil or military administrations. But Japan is nothing if not thorough and precise. Whilst her own military preparations in Korea are proceeding with the clockwork regularity which characterises all her landings and movements of troops, she has been quietly reforming a civil service, effecting a reduction of a useless armed rabble, and hurrying on the construction of four or five hundred miles of rail!

Let us now consider in some detail the Japanese military occupation of Korea, and the later advance of what will come to be called Japan's "First Army" to the north of this rocky peninsula and, perhaps, beyond. By way of preface, it may be briefly stated that in the Japanese military system the chief war unit is the division, aggregating some 14,000 men. Four brigades, each containing four battalions, constitute the usual division, and three or four divisions, with cavalry and artillery, constitute the usual "army."

The force landed at Chemulpo on February 8th was a brigade of the 12th Infantry Division, and we have already seen how beautifully the landing was managed. In a later despatch than the one quoted the *Times* correspondent gave some further details which must enhance our admiration of the manner in which this, the first operation of the war outside Japan itself, was carried out. "Everything worked," we are told, "as if the troops were moving from one Japanese island to another. Nothing was required or requisitioned locally except pilots, all of whom, for the whole coast, were secured. Everything came over with the invaders. As the first brigade arrived at Seoul, with mushroom rapidity wooden barracks and stables were constructed." During the following few days the remainder of the 12th Infantry Division, the commander of which is General Inouye, was landed, and with this force Japan at once took a military step which placed her occupation of Korea upon a sound basis.

To understand the position we must once more open our war map and look northwards, where the Yalu marks the border between Southern Manchuria and north-western Korea. On the Korean side of the river lies Wi-ju, and by later reports from the local officials at this place it is established that, some days before the rupture of diplomatic relations between Russia and Japan, the troops of the former had actually crossed the Yalu and had thus commenced what were unmistakable acts of war. The passage is said to have commenced on February 2nd, and from that date until February 15th the number of Russians crossing totalled 4,500. Of these 3,000 remained at Wi-ju, 1,000 moved to Cho-san (108 miles above Wi-ju), and 500 proceeded to An-ju, which is between forty and fifty miles north of Ping-yang.

Ping-Yang was the scene of some very brisk fighting in the Chino-Japanese War of 1844-5. From it there are roads of sorts leading both to Seoul and to Gensan, or, as it is sometimes called, Wonsan (most of the more important places in

Korea have two or three names), on the east coast of the peninsula. Northwards the route runs to Wi-ju on the near bank of the Yalu, and from the other bank over the Motien Pass to Liao-yang and thence to Mukden. A little to the south-west of Ping-yang lies Chinnampo on an important inlet, which, however, in February was frozen, the harbour not becoming practicable until the end of the first week in March. Otherwise it would have saved Japan a deal of trouble to have landed all the troops not required for the occupation of Chemulpo and Seoul at Chinnampo. As it was, the only means by which she could secure Ping-yang at the earliest possible moment was to march a sufficient force northwards from Seoul, taking at the same time the precaution of holding Gensan.

The march northwards was duly accomplished by General Inouye's division, and a truly laborious task it must have been. While the frost holds, the "going" along the rough rice-field tracks is bad enough, but when it thaws the resulting sloughs give endless trouble, especially to the artillery which accompanies the force. But the Japanese are famous marchers, and they are admirably equipped. Their clothing is described as a little heavy for marching purposes, since, in addition to a blanket, each man carries a garment resembling the *poshteen* of the Indian

Photo: Imperial News Agency.

FUSAN.

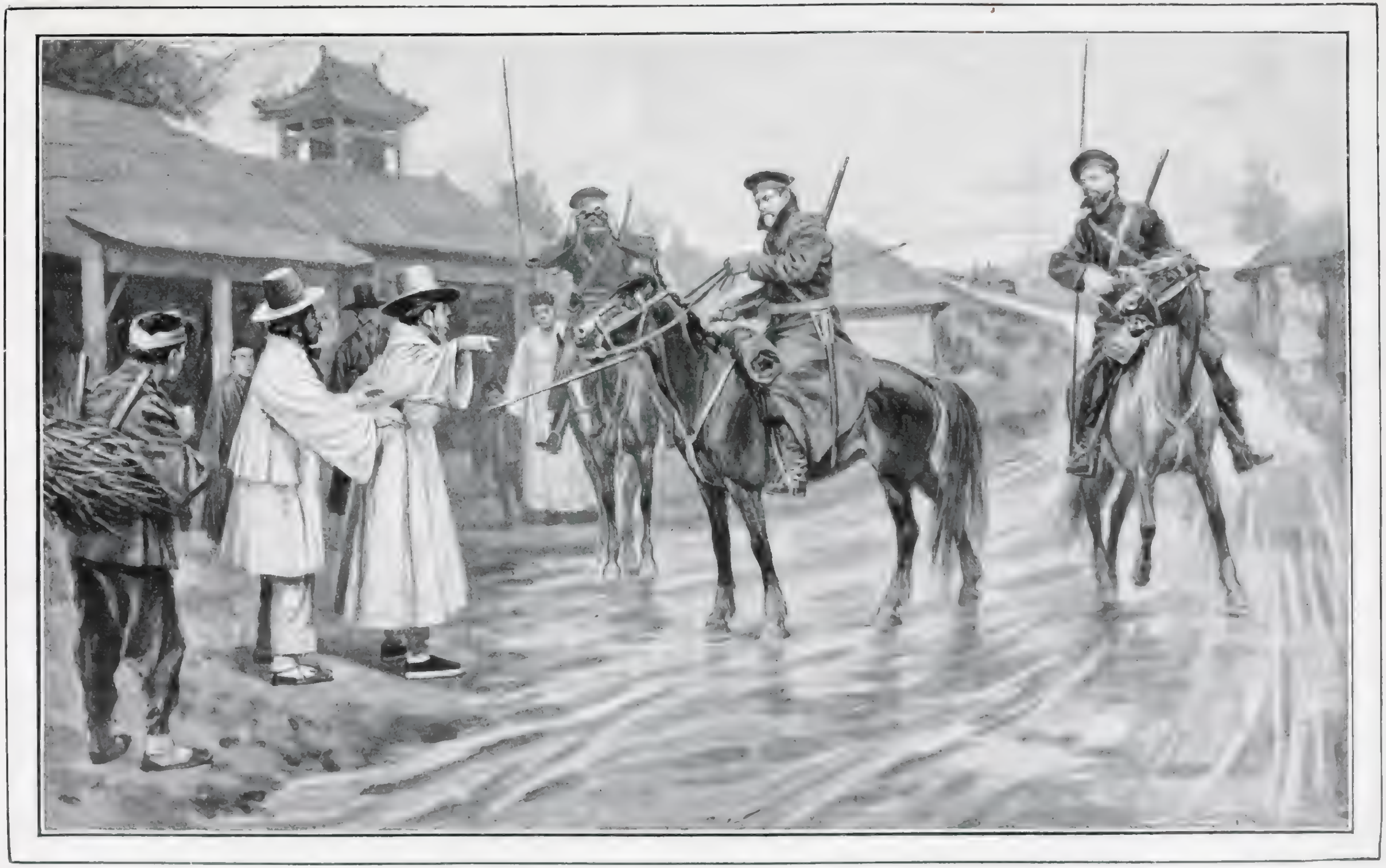
Frontier, a coat of skin with the hair inside. But such "wraps" are keenly appreciated when the day's march is done, and are the wisest possible precaution against the intense cold which will be met with further north. A correspondent describes in glowing colours the "splendid fettle" in which the troops land, and says that "the enthusiasm and confidence inspired by the successes of the sister service are exhilarating to see."

By permission, from "Koreans at Home."

WEST GATE, SEOUL.

As General Inouye's division trudges northwards through snow and ice and slush we may take a look at the Russians on both sides of the Yalu. These are mostly Cossacks and infantry of the Siberian Rifle Brigades, and their position can hardly be regarded as enviable. For, apart from the bitter cold, they are badly placed as regards supplies, since the country is poor and, even as the crow flies, it is 120 miles from Antung on the Manchurian bank of the Yalu to Liao-yang. It is largely this difficulty of keeping the troops supplied which must hinder Russia at this moment from making a more vigorous demonstration in Korea. But she is also clearly deterred by the boldness of Japan's early movements, for her cautious action henceforward is in marked contrast with her premature passage of the Yalu as far back as February 2nd. She maintains to some extent her position, and her Cossack patrols penetrate some distance into the interior. But she makes no effort to seize Ping-yang, and presently, as the Japanese position grows in strength, the Cossacks and mountain artillery which have occupied An-ju fall back, and leave the place clear for the pushful enemy.

Meanwhile, General Inouye's division has pressed on and occupied Ping-yang.



COSSACK SCOUTS GATHERING INFORMATION FROM KOREAN NATIVES.

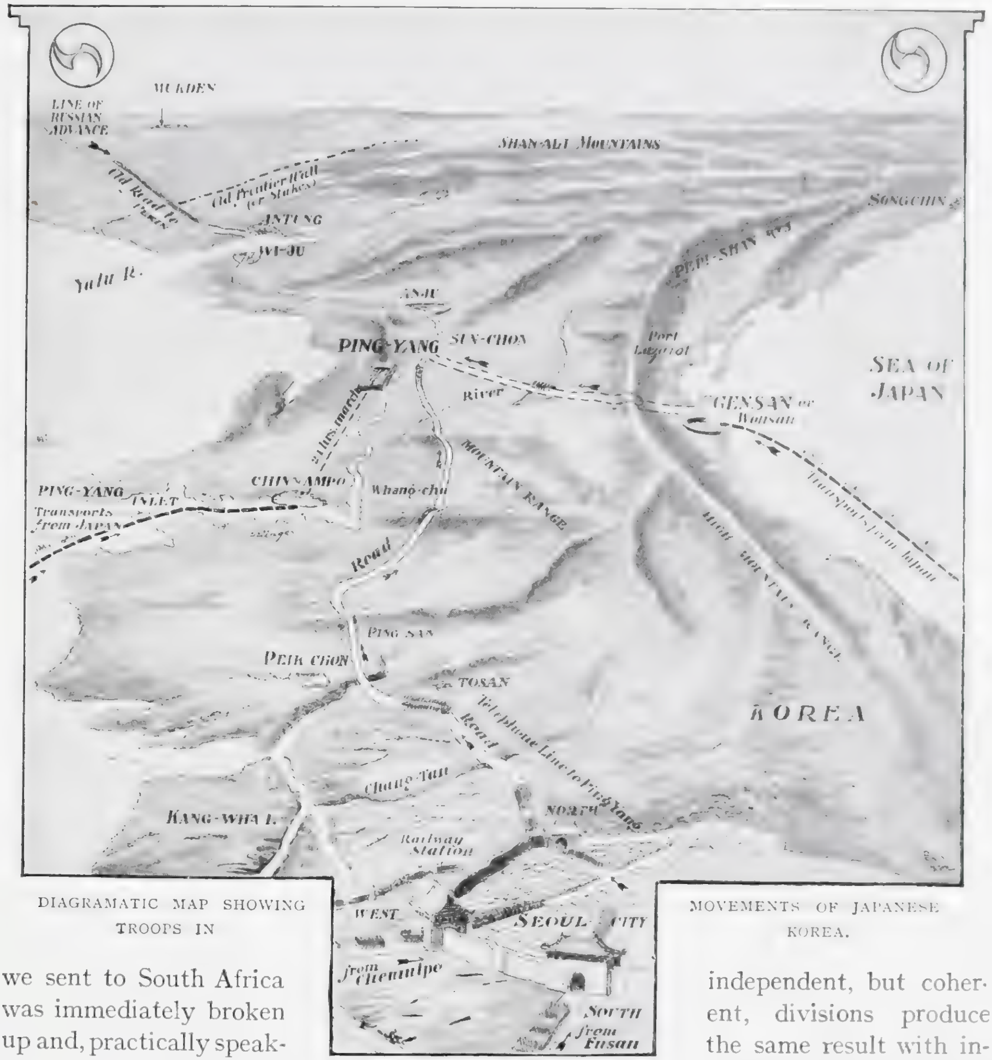
Here we have a definite operation accomplished, which, although completely bloodless, and not very exciting to read of, is full of quiet significance, and one which may be pregnant with future dramatic results.

For the Japanese now hold both ends of the important defensive line Ping-yang—Gensan, and any southern movement which the Russian general might dream of making is as effectually barred as would be the attempt of a Russian force to creep down past Gensan from Vladivostok. Of the country between the two points mentioned no serious strategical notice need be taken, so mountainous and difficult it is, and so impracticable it would be for any but a smaller Russian force than could be risked in such circumstances.

General Inouye now sets to work both to render his hold on Ping-yang secure, and to send out detachments north and east so as to interpose a screen between himself and the enemy, which is particularly desirable in order to disguise the exact nature of the coming reinforcements. In this latter respect he is hardly at an advantage as compared with the Russian general at Wi-ju. Man and horse for man and horse—a less careful qualification might be both misleading and unfair—the Japanese cavalry are hardly as efficient for reconnoitring purposes as the Cossacks. The latter, we may be sure, better mounted than their adversaries, buzz round the detached Japanese posts like flies, thereby carrying out the picturesque precept of the well-known Russian general, Dragomiroff, and probably these keen-sighted scouts glean a fair idea of what is doing at Ping-yang itself. Certainly there is much going on which is worth the watching. The position which General Nozu captured in such brilliant fashion from the Chinese in 1894 is now in a fair way to becoming a most important Japanese *point d'appui*. Entrenchments are being thrown up by the engineers who have accompanied the division; supplies are being accumulated; and every conceivable preparation is in progress for the accommodation of a force much more imposing than that which has marched up from Seoul, although we must not forget that to the latter belongs the credit of pioneering this most business-like and effective occupation of the country.

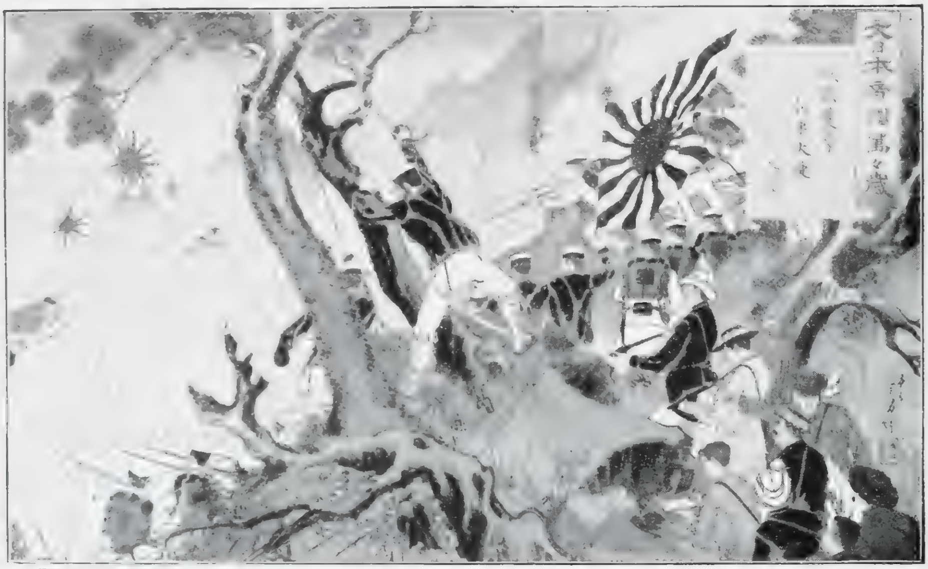
At the end of the first week in March the ice in the inlet on which Chinnampo stands has broken up, and it becomes possible to land troops here for quick despatch to Ping-yang. Accordingly, a little fleet of Japanese transports has arrived, and disembarkation takes place of nearly the whole of the remainder of the "First Army" of Japan, which now appears to consist of four divisions, under command of General Kuroki. It is pretty clear that only about three-fourths of this force will be available for an advance beyond Ping-yang, since about 3,000 men have been required as a garrison for Seoul, and doubtless for other defensive work in Korea, and as a reserve at Ping-yang, the balance of a division will be required. But the course of events seems to show that the Japanese idea is to have, by way of a start, some 55,000 men in Korea, of whom rather over 40,000 will constitute a mobile force for service beyond the Korean frontier if necessary.

Incidentally, this fact has a technical military interest to which attention may be briefly drawn. It shows the handiness of the division as a war unit specially adapted to the purpose of a maritime nation. We, who of late have dabbled in Army Corps, notwithstanding the manner in which the only Army Corps we sent to South Africa was immediately broken up and, practically speaking, disorganised, ought not to be above taking a lesson from the practical success achieved by the Japanese with their divisions in Korea. With the Army Corps system, an army of 50,000 men means two weak Army Corps, with two bloated Army Corps staffs, in addition to the Army staff; but with the divisional system, one Army staff and four strong independent, but coherent, divisions produce the same result with infinitely less cost and fuss. Where great armies of 150,000 men are concerned, it is different; but such forces are not commonly set in motion by maritime nations like Japan, or, for the matter of that, ourselves.


MUKDEN
LINE OF RUSSIAN ADVANCE
Old Road to Pekin
Old Frontier Wall (or Stakes)
SHAN-ALT MOUNTAINS
ANTUNG
WI-JU
Yalu R.
SONGCHIN
PEIK-SHAN
ANJU
PING-YANG
SUN-CHON
Port Lazaref
SEA OF JAPAN
River
GENSAN or Wonsan
Forced marches
MOUNTAIN RANGE
Transports from Japan
High Mountain Range
PING-YANG INLET
Transports from Japan
CHINNAMPO
Whang-chu
Road
PING SAN
PEIK CHON
TOSAN
KOREA
Road
Telephone Line to Ping Yang
Chang-Tan
KANG-WHA I.
NORTH
Railway Station
WEST
SEOUL CITY
from Chemulpo
SOUTH
from Fusan

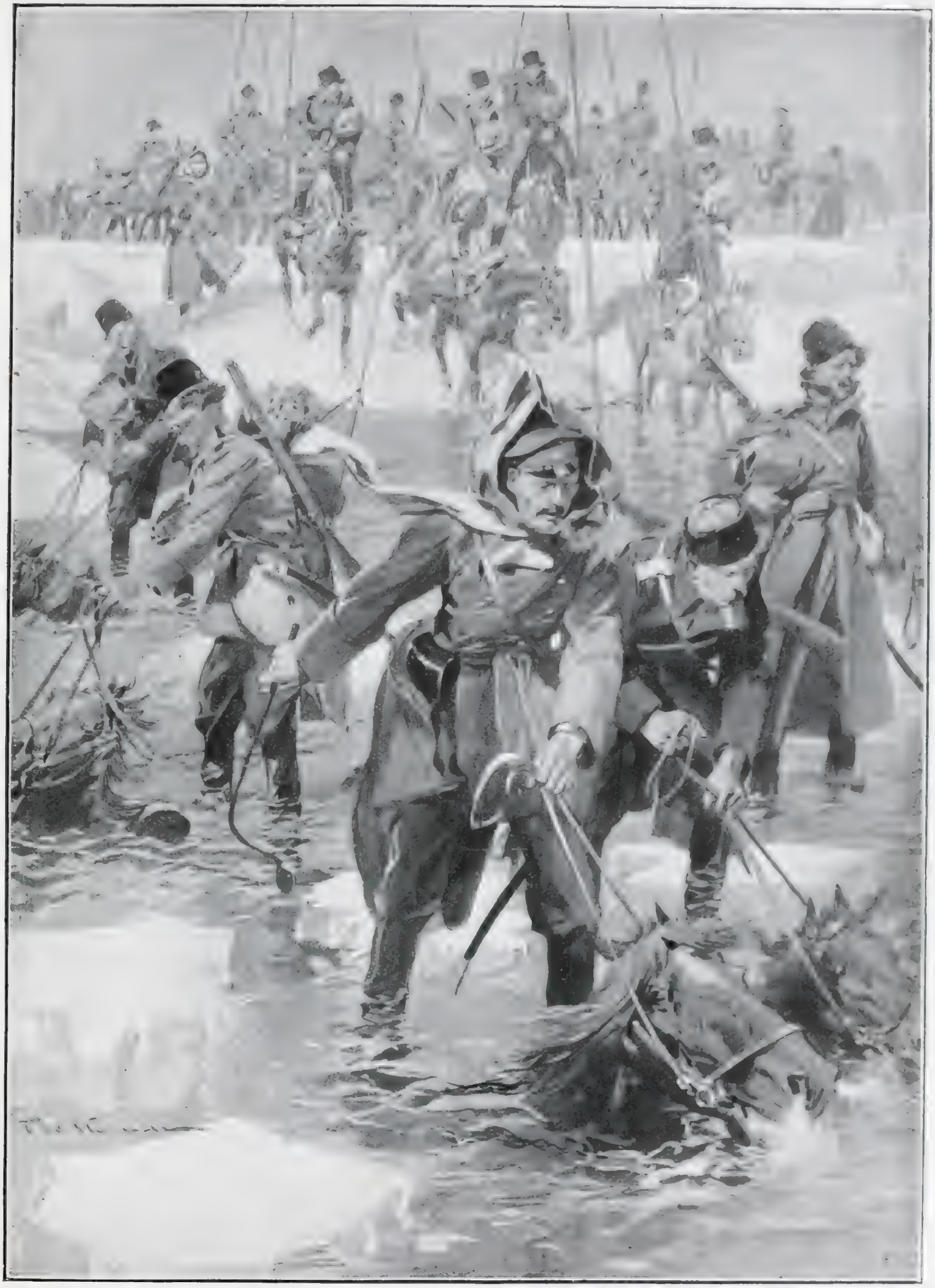
DIAGRAMATIC MAP SHOWING MOVEMENTS OF JAPANESE TROOPS IN KOREA.

After this short but, perhaps, not uninstructive excursion into the region of professional detail, let us return to the divisions being disembarked at Chinnampo. The scene is a cheerless one, for the coast is still white with snow, and there is not much life about the small seaport other than that provided by the incoming transports with their attendant warships. In the harbour there are lying a number of Chinese junks, and these are promptly annexed by the business-like Japanese for landing purposes. A junk may not have the air of speed which pervades an Atlantic liner, and it may not be as trim as a well-found yacht. But it is a distinctly roomy craft, and for disembarking, at any rate stores, where no hostile opposition is to be feared, no better "naval omnibus" could be desired. Accordingly, the landing is accomplished with great ease and smoothness, and regiment after regiment comes ashore and proceeds along the Ta-tung River to Ping-yang. The march is about twenty-four miles, a distance which the sturdy Jap soldiers probably think little of covering in one day.


From a Japanese Drawing.

JAPANESE WAR ARTISTS AND CORRESPONDENTS AT WORK.

Of the stores and munitions of war which are landed we may be sure the most tender care is taken. For upon the arrangements which are now about to be made at Ping-yang may depend much of Japan's success in her future land campaign. As the number of troops landed increases, so the preparations which General Inouye's division has been making become more and more significant. The conclusion is that Ping-yang, in connection with Chinnampo, will henceforth not only be a strategic point, but a base of operations, and its importance may be expected steadily to rise until it fulfils all the requirements of this exacting position. The idea is a suggestive one, and inspires added respect



A FEAT OF HORSEMANSHIP: RUSSIAN CAVALRY CROSSING A RIVER.

for the extraordinary soundness of reasoning which has characterised every Japanese movement hitherto. By making Ping-yang at any rate an advanced base, not only is a quantity of unprofitable marching avoided—for it will be months before even a light railway can be constructed between Ping-yang and Seoul—but the Korean capital is kept clear of all disturbing military movements. Further, an immense amount of military preparation can, if necessary, take place without anyone outside the authorities at Chinnampo and Ping-yang being much wiser. The former is, it is true, a treaty port, but the trade is insignificant, and with the skill which the Japanese have hitherto shown in masking their proceedings, and a censorship of the most rigid sort, a Japanese general at Ping-yang would have far less difficulty in keeping his own counsels than if he were surrounded by the watchful eyes of foreigners at Seoul and Chemulpo.

For the transport of stores between Chinnampo and Ping-yang the Ta-tung River affords facilities, and the road is at once taken in hand by Japanese military engineers and greatly improved. Let us follow a Japanese regiment along till we come to Ping-yang itself, a big, walled city, lying along the north bank of the Ta-tung, and consisting chiefly of rude huts among which the lofty buildings round the gateways are conspicuous. Many an officer and soldier who fought in the 1894 battle of Ping-yang is now entering it under very different conditions, and it may be taken for granted that reminiscences are exchanged and high hopes of equally thrilling experiences expressed. Historically, the changed situation is full of peculiar interest. A decade back Korea was being "rescued" from China, the great Conservative Power of the Far East; to-day an attempt is being made to prevent her falling into the grasp of the great octopus of the West. Ping-yang and the Yalu settled the former question decisively. Ping-yang and the Yalu may have much to say to the solution of the latter-day problem. But it is still Korea which is in dispute, still Japan which is Korea's champion; still the Koreans, queerly-hatted, sluggish, and unspeakably dirty, in spite of their fair outward raiment, who look on, and groan inwardly because the trim Japanese soldiers are pouring into Ping-yang, and making it far more like a great entrenched camp than a peaceable city of folk who want simply to be left alone. Yet honesty and fair treatment are conspicuously shown by these vigorous intruders upon Korean indolence. They pay for everything they require, and do not simply take what they want and ride away, as the Cossacks who have been prowling through the adjacent villages are said to do. The one complaint against them is that they are too fond of making "lump" payments to some leading official, to whose fingers much of the money sticks, after the fashion of Korea where money and officials are concerned.

By the end of the third week in March the Japanese position at Ping-yang is pretty clearly defined. There are about 40,000 troops in readiness for a move, and already the advanced guard has taken up a forward position, occupying lines uniting the towns of Ka-san, An-ju, Yeng-pieng, and Pak-chen. These lines, which have been fortified by the Japanese, cover a front of about forty-five miles. The exact disposition of the advanced guard is not known; but General Mishtchenko, who is commanding on the Yalu, reports that there are 3,000 Japanese at An-ju and 1,000 at Pak-chen. At Chinnampo there are said to be about forty Japanese men-of-war and transports lying at anchor.

By the Russians there is thought to be indecision among the Japanese, and they speak as if the advance of the latter had been suspended. But the commander of the Japanese Army has good reason not to hurry forward. In the first place, his eventual advance has probably from the first been intended to coincide with another great movement. Secondly, the ice has not yet disappeared from the streams between Ping-yang and Wi-ju, the bridges over which have been destroyed by the Cossack patrols, and there are few things more baffling to the military commander than a river in which loose masses of ice are jostling one another. Thirdly, it may be that it is desired to get, at any rate, into some sort of touch with the Japanese troops at Gensan on the east coast.

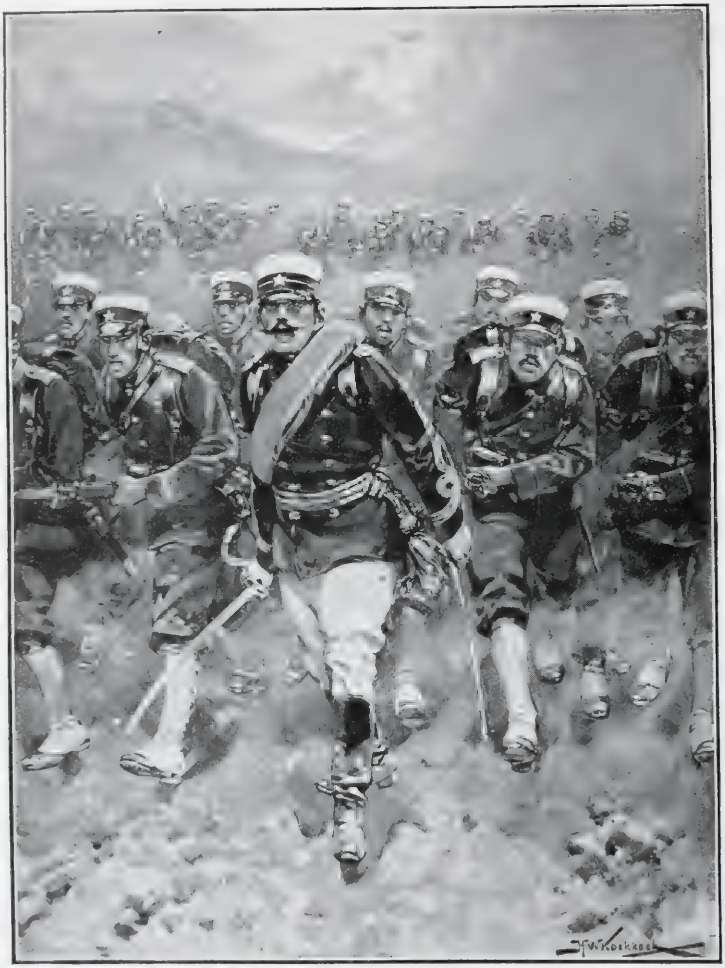
Between Ping-yang and Gensan there is, as has been mentioned, a route, but it is a very difficult one, for the spinal range of mountains which runs down into the peninsula has to be crossed, and between Gensan and Yangtok, which is less than half-way to Ping-yang, there are five passes to be negotiated, which the frozen snow now renders especially trying. It will probably assist the later comprehension of this narrative if it be mentioned here that evidently the Japanese have been making strenuous efforts to "get through" from Gensan to Ping-yang. About this time an official Russian report stated that Cossack scouts, about thirty miles to the north-east of Ping-yang, had captured Japanese scouts coming from the east with a Korean guide. The latter declared that 8,000 Japanese infantry, with several field-guns, had recently reached Yangtok. Russian cavalry were said to have been despatched in the hope of checking the Japanese movement from Gensan, which must not be overlooked at this stage of the operations, and is extremely interesting even if it does not lead, as it may, to important and definite results. For such a speedy joining of hands over such an intervening space of rocky country, while hardly for the present a strategical necessity, shows how thoroughly every detail of these Korean operations has been planned, and how reluctant the Japanese are to leave any sort of gap in their line through which the enemy can conceivably creep.

With the Russians entrenched at Wi-ju, on the south bank of the Yalu, the Japanese advanced guard only forty miles further south, and patrols on both sides scouring the intervening country, we may say that the opposing forces are fairly face to face on land, and it can only be a matter of days before a serious collision takes place. Meanwhile, there are incidents of which one reported by General Mishtchenko on March 23rd may serve as an example.

It is about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and two sotnias of Cossacks are reconnoitring a little north of An-ju. Cossack regiments, it may be mentioned, are, at war strength, from about 600 to about 1,000 strong, and contain from four to six sotnias, which correspond fairly closely to our squadrons. The object of this reconnaissance is to discover whether the enemy have yet crossed in any strength the Cheng-cheng river, which flows a little to the north of An-ju.

The Cossacks are not picking their way

with any particular effort, for they are familiar with the neighbourhood, having, in fact, but recently evacuated it. They are, of course, aware that the Japanese in considerable force are not far off, for they have made several previous reconnaissances, in one of which, before the Japanese occupation of An-ju, they even rode up to within half a mile of Ping-yang itself and exchanged shots with the Japanese sharpshooters who manned the walls. Boldly, then, these fine fellows press along, looking ahead for evidence of the enemy rather than troubling to collect topographical details. The sotnias are divided, and about a dozen miles to the north-west of An-ju, near Pak-chen, one of them comes in sight of a mounted outpost of the enemy, numbering some thirty men.



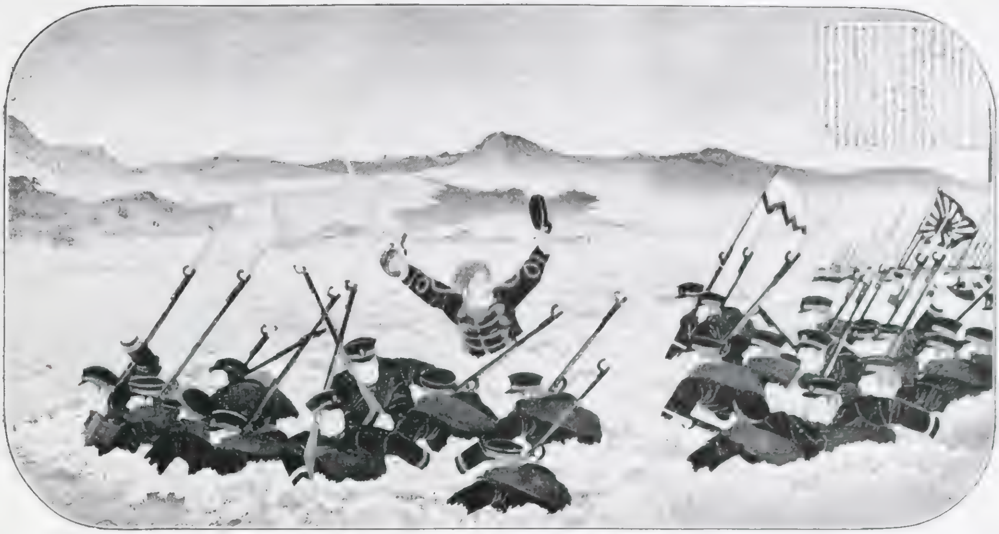
A CHARGE OF JAPANESE INFANTRY.

JAPANESE TROOPS DISEMBARKING AT CHEMULPO.

The Japanese are on the alert, and, noticing that the Cossacks outnumber them, signal to other cavalry and infantry in rear to come up to their assistance. The Cossacks also send back for reinforcements, and a brisk little affair seems imminent. But a patrol which knows its business is aware that that business does not consist in unnecessary fighting, but in obtaining information and maintaining contact with the enemy when contact has once been gained. Accordingly, although we have here all the materials for a smart engagement, and both sides are keen to come to blows, the matter resolves itself into the burning of a little gunpowder, a few casualties, and a prudent retirement, which is not followed up. In fact, a typical "set-to" between an advanced post and an adventurous patrol, and one which is extremely characteristic of the opposing forces concerned. It might be pushing comparisons too far to suggest similarity between the dashing tactics of the Cossack horsemen and the Japanese torpedo craft, but there is no doubt that the Russian irregular horse, operating from the Yalu, are giving the Japanese Army a good many more anxious moments than the Japanese Navy ever experienced from the earlier movements of the Russian fleet!

As hinted above, the skirmish is soon over, but before it closes those engaged have come to pretty close quarters. The Cossacks advance to within 400 paces of the post and open fire. A Japanese officer and one man are seen to fall, and a horse is killed. These are among the earliest casualties in the land campaign, only one similar incident having been previously reported. The Japanese fire in reply, but cavalrymen are seldom the best of shots, and the Cossacks are unscathed. Fresh volleys are exchanged, and now some Japanese infantry, of whom there are two companies posted at Pak-chen, come running up, and the Cossacks know that their chances of escaping untouched by carefully aimed infantry fire are ethereal. Accordingly, they retire, and as the Japanese cavalry are in no strength, and their ponies are no match for the Cossack horses in speed and endurance, the patrol is not pursued.

Here, then, we have the land forces of Russia and Japan actually in touch, shots exchanged, and the blood of gallant soldiers shed. A trivial commencement, perhaps—far less dramatic than the first midnight torpedo attack on Port Arthur. But great tragedies, even in literature, often begin tamely enough to make the unsophisticated wonder how from such futile openings any real emotion, passion, or action can be evolved.



From a Native Drawing.

JAPANESE INFANTRY CROSSING A RIVER.

CHAPTER XII.

A FIRST ENGAGEMENT—RUSSIAN HOPES AND FEARS—COSSACKS ON THE MOVE—SHARP FIGHTING AT CHONG-JU—FORWARD TO THE YALU—RUSSIANS EVACUATE KOREA—FIRST STAGE OF THE LAND CAMPAIGN ENDED.

IT is about ten o'clock in the morning of March 28th, when the first real collision takes place between the land forces of Russia and Japan. The Russians, under General Mishtchenko, are still entrenched at Wi-ju on the south bank of the Yalu; the Japanese are still pushing forward from Ping-Yang. For the last three days the Cossacks have been endeavouring to draw the Japanese patrols into an action, but the latter are not to be tempted, and retire on contact beyond Chong-ju, a place of some importance, which lies about 30 miles to the west of An-ju. It will assist the reader who has only a small scale map at hand if he bears in mind the fact that, although as the crow flies the Japanese advanced posts are now only some 40 miles south of the Yalu, the interval by the main route is considerably greater. From Wi-ju the route runs in a south-easterly direction for about 18 miles to Chölsan; thence in a southerly curve for about 22 miles to Koak-san; thence to Chong-ju about 15 miles. About half-way between Chong-ju and An-ju lies Kasan, of which some mention will be made in the following narrative.

On March 27th General Mishtchenko has learnt that four squadrons of the enemy's cavalry are posted near Chong-ju, and he judges this to be a favourable opportunity for an opening engagement. Accordingly, in the early morning of the 28th, he himself moves towards Chong-ju with six sotnias of Trans-Baikal Cossacks, most, if not all, belonging to the Argunsk Regiment. It would appear that this force aggregates about 500 men, and it may be assumed that they are one and all in hard fighting condition, and yearning for a satisfactory trial of strength with an enemy now regarded with something akin to respect.

There are various reasons which make General Mishtchenko anxious to come to blows with the advancing Japanese. For weeks past his own movements have been in the nature of a retreat, although that fact has been cleverly disguised by highly coloured statements, and obscured by the skill and daring with which the Cossacks have been used to hamper the work of the Japanese patrols. It is a serious matter to be retiring through a country never abounding in supplies, with the clear knowledge that the inhabitants understand perfectly well the reason for the movement. The Russians have hardly endeared themselves to the Koreans by their system of paying for what they require, and the loss of prestige occasioned by continued retreat cannot but increase the unwillingness of the natives to part with food for which at best only a village herdman or a dishonest "official" receives any sort of compensation. Already the news of the Japanese advance in force, and of further landings at Chinnampo, is beginning to spread over Northern Korea, and the fact that all this has been accomplished without any marked effort on the part of the Russians to meet and hurl back an enemy whom but a few weeks ago they affected to treat with sublime contempt cannot but impress even the lazy and indifferent subjects of the Hermit Kingdom. Of actual opposition there is no fear, but the meanest native of a country through which foreign troops are moving can do something to help or hinder the latter, and the Russian position, even on the Yalu, is not so strong and comfortable that it would not be vastly improved by a successful endeavour to stem, even temporarily, the tide of Japanese progress northwards through Korea.

By this time General Kuropatkin is

THE CITY OF PING-YANG

probably known to have arrived—at any rate, at Harbin—which, as a matter of fact, he reached on March 26th, and it is very possible that General Mishtchenko has actually received a message from the redoubtable Commander-in-Chief, indicating, perhaps, that a still further retirement may become ultimately necessary, but that, in any case, a brisk cavalry affair might add convenient lustre to the Russian arms at this particular juncture. Be this as it may, the knowledge that the idol of the Russian Army is now in actual control of the operations in the field would naturally stimulate to further exertions the troops in immediate contact with the enemy.

There is, perhaps, yet another reason why General Mishtchenko should earnestly desire an immediate collision of a more serious character than such trivial affairs as that of the 23rd, to which reference was made in the preceding chapter. The troops under his command have been having an unmistakably hard time ever since they commenced the retirement from the neighbourhood of Ping-Yang, and painful stories are told of the pitiable plight to which they have been reduced in the matter of food and fuel. For the latter they have been thankful to use the telegraph poles, while the former is often simply a matter of organised plunder. Many of the horses have died or are dying through want of forage, and a Cossack without his horse is in a bad way indeed, until he can lay hands on another. But the Russian soldier, especially he who has already had a prolonged taste of Manchurian service, is no stranger to privation and other hardship. What may trouble him at this period even more seriously than the want of food, the bitter cold, and the possible loss of his beloved mount is the strong apprehension lest there may be something uncannily wrong in the present situation, something which his tendency to superstition makes him brood over with a sense of growing fear and sick presentiment. In a previous chapter we have seen how the Siberian peasantry were cheered by encouraging portents in the sky, and how glad they were to believe that St. George himself was about to lead

AND THE RIVER TA TUNG.

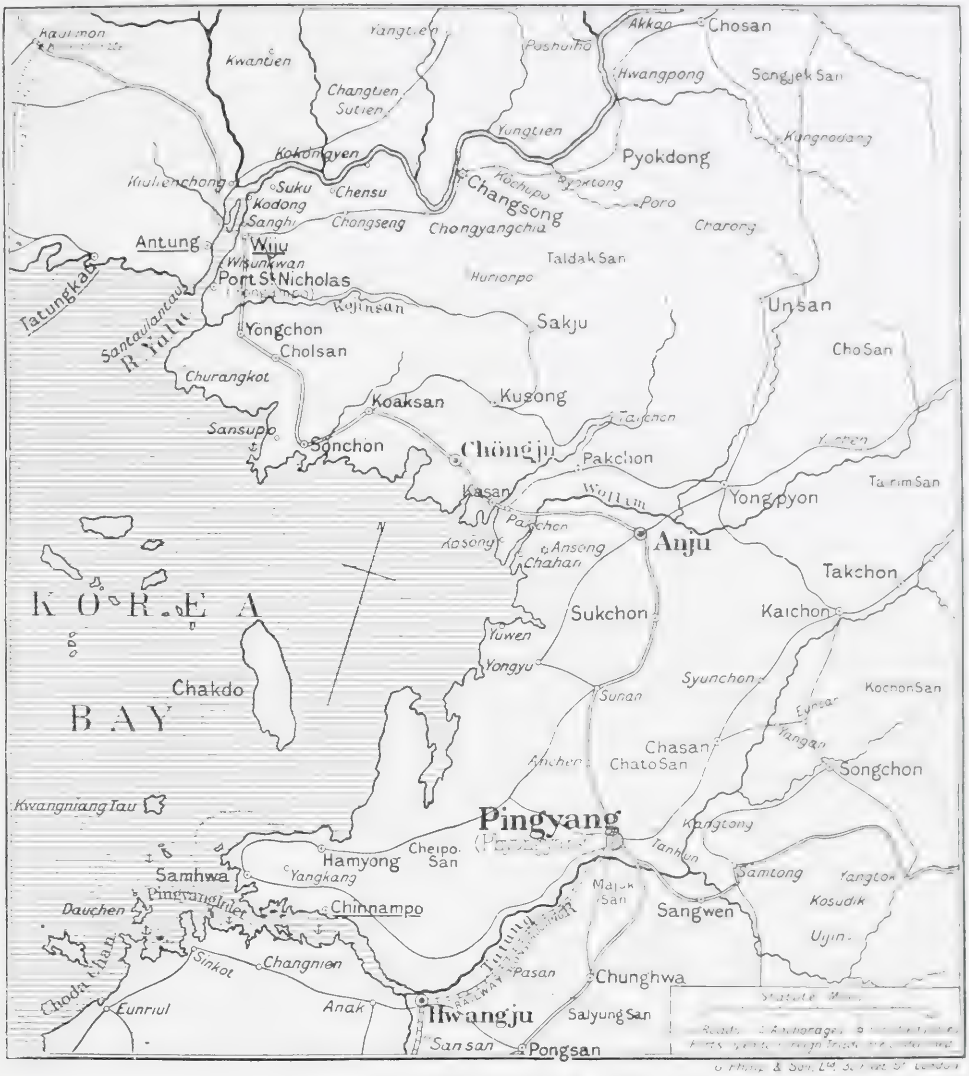
the troops of Holy Russia to victory. Now in Manchuria we have another phase of Slav superstition to record. Here there have arisen strange rumours to the effect that the Japanese are possessed of wonderful magnetic stones endowed with magical properties, by the use of which the adversaries of the owners are rendered incapable of fighting. To us such foolishness may seem incredible, but, of course, many superstitions no less childish are from time to time current among our own native troops, and in the Russian Army in Manchuria there are thousands of soldiers who are to all intents and purposes Asiatics in their ideas. Anyhow, the Russian officers recognise the seriousness of such fancies, for they sedulously endeavour to inspire confidence among their men by performing magnetic experiments in their presence, doubtless in order to show their own command of "magical powers." It is said, nevertheless, that the men continue to lament their hard fate in being sent to fight sorcerers, and if this unfortunate spirit is at all observable among Mishtchenko's Cossacks, we may rest assured that he will be additionally thankful to give them, if he can, some tangible evidence that Japanese magic cannot withstand prosaic lead and steel.

After this necessary introduction, let us rejoin the six Cossack sotnias which are working towards Cheng-ju on the morning of March 28th. About ten o'clock the scouts come in sight of the place, and shortly afterwards, as the main body incautiously approaches, fire is opened by the Japanese, of whom, it seems, there are one squadron of cavalry and a company of infantry in or about the town.

Two sotnias—we may call them squadrons without serious inaccuracy—of the Cossacks now occupy an adjacent eminence about 600 yards distant, and a brisk engagement ensues. Three other sotnias come up, and the Japanese are subjected to a heavy cross-fire. "Notwithstanding this and our commanding position," to quote the complimentary words of the Russian report, "the Japanese gallantly held their ground, and it was only after a fierce fight of half an hour's duration that they ceased fire and sought refuge in their houses."

It is not difficult to form in the mind's eye a vivid picture of this stage of the engagement. Five or six hundred men on one side, and perhaps a couple of hundred on the other, can make a pretty hot fight of it at a range of less than half a mile, if they are so disposed, and there is not likely to have been any lack of disposition in this case. One can imagine the Cossacks particularly eager to make an impression and yet not caring to make a dash at an enemy of whom about half are infantry armed with quick-firing rifles. Accordingly, their horses are probably withdrawn some little distance behind the hill, while a considerable firing line pours what lead it can into the space occupied by the stubborn enemy. The Japanese, on the other hand, are not much better placed either for offence or defence. For a single squadron and a single company of infantry to advance against six squadrons would be purely foolish, and the smart seizure by the Russians of a dominating position makes an effective defence by no means easy. Still, it is not Japan's *rôle* to give in, more especially on such an occasion as this, and it is easy to understand the determination with which this little force clings as long as it possibly can to its advanced position, before retiring to the shelter of the town. It is probably at this stage that most of the recorded casualties occur: As to these, the Russian and Japanese accounts differ considerably, but the truth seems to be that about a score on either side were killed or wounded. The Russians had three officers severely wounded, one of whom subsequently dies, while the Japanese own to one lieutenant killed and one wounded, both belonging to the cavalry.

Shortly after the Japanese have retired among the houses in the outskirts of Chöng-ju, three fresh squadrons of Japanese cavalry come at full gallop along the road from Kasan towards Chöng-ju. Two of these squadrons enter the town and


Kwantien
Yangtien
Poshuiho
Akkan
Chosan
Hwangpong
Songjek San
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Sutien
Yungtien
Kungnodang
Kokonayen
Pyokdong
Kiulienchong
Suku
Chensu
Kochupo
Changsong
Pyoktong
Poro
Kodong
Sanghi
Chongseng
Chongyangchia
Charong
Antung
Wiju
Wisunkwan
Taldak San
Port St Nicholas
Hurionpo
Tatungkao
Santaulantau
R. Yalu
Kojinsan
Unsan
Yongchon
Sakju
Cholsan
ChoSan
Churangkot
Koaksan
Kusong
Sansupo
Taichon
Sonchon
Chöngju
Pakchon
Kasan
Wollim
Yongpyon
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KOREA
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Kangtong
Cheipo San
Hamyong
Tanhun
Samhwa
Yangkang
Samtong
Yangtok
Pingyang Inlet
Majok San
Kosudik
Dauchen
Chinnampo
Sangwen
Uijin
Taitung
Choda chan.
Sinkot
Changnien
Pasan
Chunghwa
Eunriul
Anak
Hwangju
Salyung San
Railway
San san
Pongsan
Statute Miles

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AREA OF FIRST JAPANESE ADVANCE.

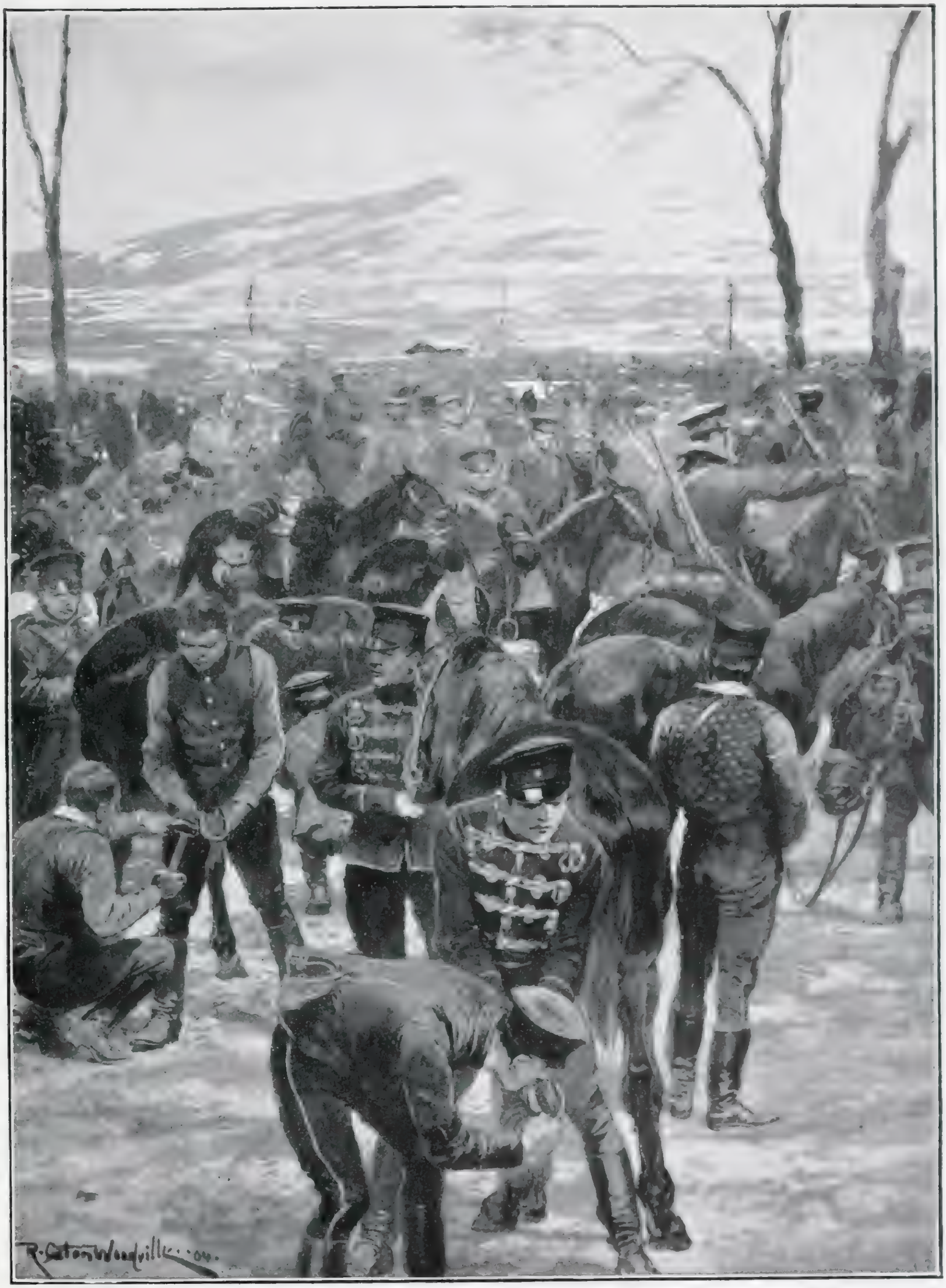
join the Japanese firing line, but the third, according to General Mishtchenko, falls back in disorder under the repeated volleys from the Cossack position.

For another hour the engagement continues, the Cossacks making every effort to prevent the Japanese from leaving the streets and houses of the town, and the Japanese doubtless chafing at being cooped up without any chance of doing effective damage. Altogether a somewhat curious position, and one very different from the traditional *rencontre* of cavalry with cavalry. Possibly, had the company of Japanese infantry been absent, the Cossacks would have shown more pushfulness, and in that event would doubtless have been met with equal "go" by the Japanese. But in any case the undersized mounts on both sides would have rendered "shock tactics" of rather trifling account. In the actual circumstances it is inevitable that the combat should be to all intents and purposes a mounted infantry one, and, professionally speaking, both sides appear to merit admiration for the manner in which they sustained a difficult, and perhaps to neither an altogether congenial, part.

Whether the presence of the infantry company does or does not determine the character of this engagement, its conclusion is certainly due to infantry intervention. While the Cossacks are still firing into the town, four companies of Japanese infantry are seen doubling up the Kasan road. Clearly the time has come for the Russians to retire, since the presence of such a marked preponderance of Japanese rifles can have but one result. Accordingly, General Mishtchenko gives the word to "Mount," and a pretty little exhibition of discipline takes place, which shows that the Cossacks can run the best regular cavalry close in the matter of that most trying operation, a retirement in the face of a superior enemy. One sotnia covers the movement, keeping up a steady fire on the Japanese position, and the remainder, withdrawing in perfect order, form up in line behind the hill. The wounded are placed in front, and the retirement, according to General Mishtchenko, is "carried out with the deliberation of parade."

There is something quite Russian in this fine performance. Not a few similar instances have occurred in great wars of the ease with which the soldiers of the Tsar can on emergency be handled in circumstances calculated to shake the discipline and steadiness even of seasoned troops. One such instance may be recalled in which the famous Skobeleff took a leading part. It happened in the struggle with Turkey in 1877 that some Russian infantry had shown unsteadiness in the presence of the enemy, and the matter came under the immediate notice of the White General himself. His method of correction was characteristic. Halting the regiment well within range of the enemy's rifles, he deliberately drilled it as if on parade, putting it through exercises which, of course, in the circumstances were utterly meaningless, and which must have considerably astounded the watching Turks. We may be very sure that that regiment, after its release from this spectacular ordeal, went forward with considerable vigour, and never again wavered or lost touch, at any rate in any action in which Skobeleff was present.

As might be expected, this favourable opportunity for an advance was


R. Caton Woodville. '04.

JAPANESE CAVALRY ENCAMPMENT AT SEOUL: FARRIERS AT WORK.

seized by the Japanese, and in the face of a heavy fire the Jap cavalry charged up the hill, accelerating, perhaps, the Russian retreat. General Mishtchenko says in his report that "the Japanese squadrons, which had been thrown into disorder, were evidently unable to occupy promptly the position evacuated by the Russians, and the infantry arrived too late." But it seems that, while preserving the "deliberation of parade," the Russians did not linger long in a neighbourhood which would shortly have become unpleasantly warm. Some attempt at pursuit may have been made, but we may regard the action as over from the moment that the last Cossack in the rear-guard sprang into his saddle and galloped off. We have General Mishtchenko's word for it that the Russian rear-guard "arrived quietly" at Koak-san, where it made a halt of two hours in order that the wounded might receive attention. At nine o'clock in the evening the force reached Chöl-san, which lies one march south of Wi-ju

Meanwhile the Japanese, not a little elated, it may be imagined, by the retirement of this considerable force of Cossacks, proceeded, with shouts of "Banzai!"—the Jap equivalent of our "Hurrah!"—to occupy Chong-ju, the inhabitants of which may well have been somewhat bewildered by the strange revenges brought by the "whirligig of Time" in the past few weeks. First a Russian advance, than a Russian retirement, a Japanese advance, a Russian attack, a brisk engagement, with bullets by hundreds falling among the houses, and finally a Japanese occupation, and pretty clear evidence that many thousands more Japanese soldiers will follow in the near future! For what was only lately one of the most secluded corners of the wide world, north-western Korea, is being "opened up" at a singularly rapid rate, and it is hard to say whether, where such vigorous reformers as the Japanese are at work, there is much chance that Chong-ju will ever return to its primitive state of contented sloth.

Without delaying to dip deeply into Korean futurities, let us briefly examine an engagement which, insignificant as it is, has a curious interest in that the conditions under which it was fought cannot possibly be repeated. Indecisive though the conclusion may have been from the standpoint of those who think that a victory is impossible unless it is accompanied by a decided difference in the recorded tale of casualties, we are here face to face with one or two strong facts which unmistakably illuminate even General Mishtchenko's simple and, on the whole, impartial narrative. The latter, again, is in itself a wholesome corrective of that class of criticism which seeks to find a professional reason for everything done in the course of a campaign, and fails to make allowance for considerations like those mentioned at the beginning of this chapter as having probably influenced the Russian commander in his movement on Chong-ju. Thus it has been suggested that the latter was merely what is called a "reconnaissance in force," with a view to gleaning information of the strength of the advancing "First Army" of Japan. But General Mishtchenko had previously reported fully and accurately as to the Japanese advance, and he himself says that his movement was made as a direct result of information that a Japanese force worth attacking was posted near

Chöng-ju. Here, clearly, was no reconnaissance in force, but a deliberate attempt to force an engagement in which there was every prospect that the Russians would succeed in inflicting a sharp reverse upon the enemy, thus commencing the land operations with what might easily be worked up into a Russian "victory."

admittedly gallant defence, and with losses evidently about equal to those inflicted on the attack: The advantage, such as it is, rests with Japan, and in a first collision even the small superiority here exhibited may be of very real significance, always supposing it does not lead to over-confidence.

JAPANESE FIELD TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

The attempt failed, and failed somewhat signally, notwithstanding General Mishtchenko's heroic attempts to magnify the probable losses of the enemy. At no point in the engagement is Russian superiority indicated. Five hundred Cossacks occupying a commanding position fail to dislodge a couple of hundred Japanese; the former retire on the appearance of reinforcements, the latter remain masters of the field. after an

Mr. McKenzie, the war correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who was the first to send to England any detailed account of this engagement, remarks that it was characterised by many instances of individual bravery on both side. Thus, Lieutenant Basil, a Russian officer, fell wounded when about 100 paces from the Japanese. A sergeant who attempted to rescue him was mortally wounded. Another took the sergeant's place, but was shot.

Then two Cossacks tried together, and were successful.

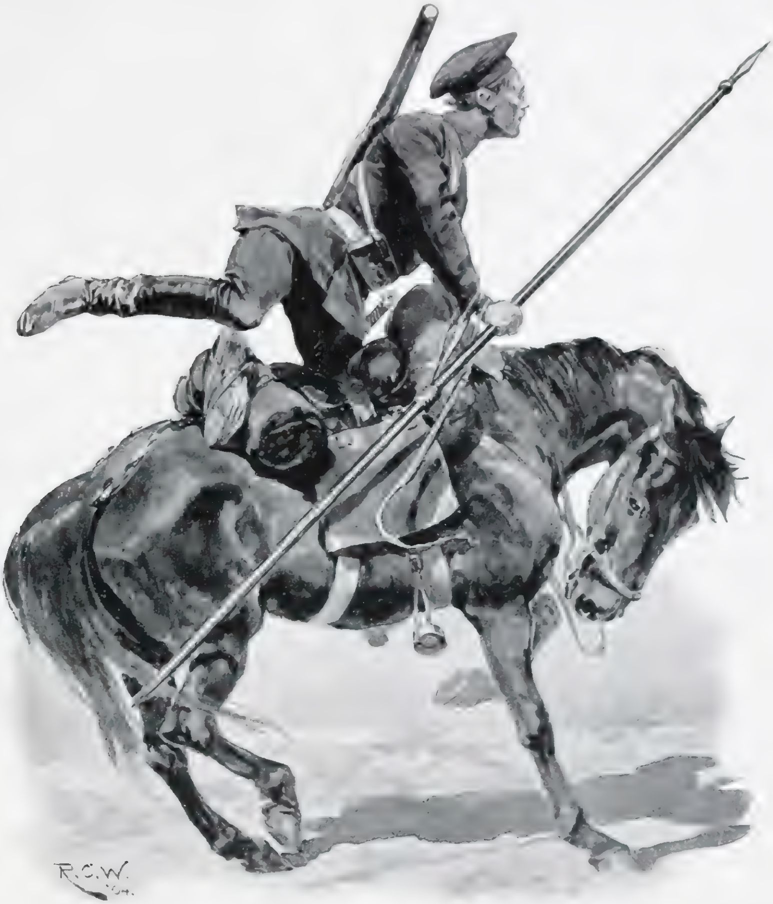
"Another incident," says Mr. McKenzie, "shows the individual initiative of the Japanese soldier. A Japanese private, who had been isolated, saw the main party of the Russians pushing on towards the south gate. He immediately hid himself, and waited until the Russians were near. He then deliberately shot the Russian commander, thus throwing the force into confusion. The private escaped, but was wounded later in the day."

After the engagement at Chong-ju the Japanese advance continues steadily, and the First Army, numbering 45,000, and consisting, it is said, of the Imperial Guard and the 2nd and 12th Divisions, moves forward towards Wi-ju by three routes. The reader should bear in mind that the advance of a great body of troops like this is, at the best of times, a very different matter from the simple movement of a small unit like a battalion or a brigade. Even where there are good roads and spacious camping-grounds, the mere distance between the head and tail of a column 15,000 or 20,000 strong makes it, as a rule, undesirable to move more than that number along any one route if anything like coherence be desired. Even when a division some 12,000 strong is moving with text-book precision, the distance between the vanguard and the rear-guard may be not far short of ten miles; and, where the roads are bad, it goes without saying that the stringing-out of a large mixed force will be greatly increased.

Perhaps we may never know exactly how difficult was this advance of the First Army of Japan northwards from Ping-yang, but it is important that an attempt should be made to understand what a frightfully wearing and tedious process it must have been. In the first place, magnificent as is the spirit of the troops, the fact that many of the men are suffering from frost-bite and that the horses, or rather ponies, are in dreadfully poor condition, makes it extremely hard to maintain that regular, even if slow, rate of progress which is of immense importance where large bodies of troops are concerned. Again, the snows are beginning to melt and the ice on the streams to break up, the country becoming a vast morass, and the difficulties thus being sensibly increased. The progress of the artillery in such disheartening circumstances is naturally slow to a painful degree. Six ponies are attached to each gun; yet, even with these, the wheels frequently stick so fast in the mire that serious delay—which, of course, is communicated to the rest of the column in rear—is incurred. There are few sights more depressing on the line of march than that of a gun to all appearance hopelessly bogged, the drivers doing all in their power to help the straining teams, the deep-sunk wheels refusing to budge an inch, and, perhaps, thousands of eager troops halted because of this one hindrance. Not all the forethought of the Japanese General Staff, not the most spirited endeavours on the part of the artillery officers and men, can prevent countless delays of this sort on the march upwards from Ping-yang to the Yalu; and it is small wonder that the rate of progress is hardly such as to satisfy impatient students of the war, who cannot comprehend what war in such conditions is.

Yet, slow as is the rate of advance, it is sure, and the Japanese take care to make it good by neglecting no precaution.

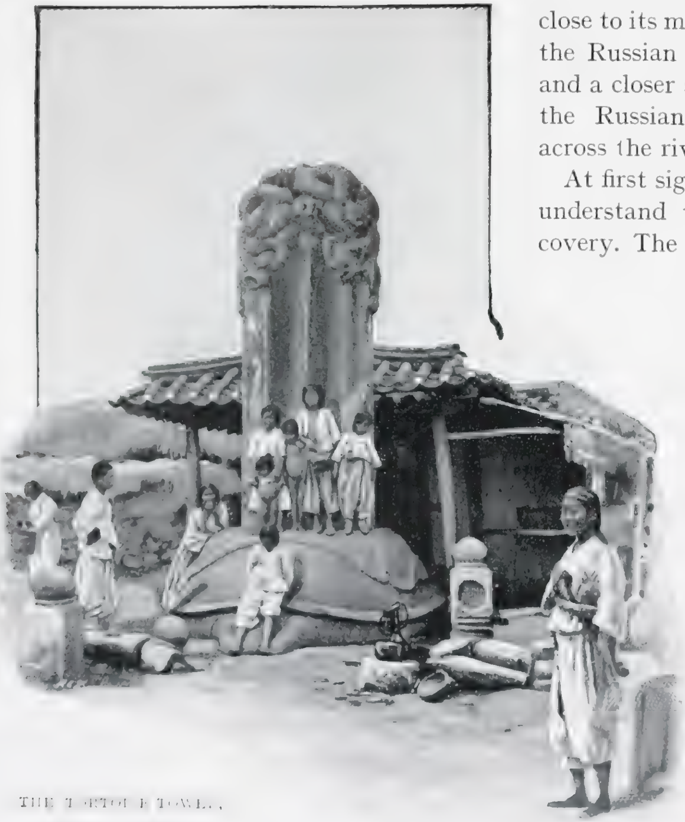
Their movement, as an *Express* correspondent observes, is most circumspect and methodical. At each step they are careful to leave behind fortified posts and stores of provision and ammunition. At the same time they study to ingratiate themselves as far as possible with the natives, although in this respect they do not seem altogether successful. For in Northern Korea there are numerous firebrands, known as Tonghaks, who were largely instrumental in precipitating the Chino-Japanese War of 1894, and these are evidently bent on again giving trouble. They have revived an ancient prophecy that in May of this year the present Korean dynasty will be overthrown and a new era begun, in which the Tonghak supremacy will be unpleasantly marked by massacres of all who have failed to support the revolutionaries. Along the lines on which her troops are marching Japan has no difficulty with these scamps; but the presence of disaffection further inland is not without serious drawbacks, and here and there short shrift has to be



A COSSACK OF THE LINE.

given to Tonghaks who have been caught red-handed in the act of inciting the country-folk to disturbance, or of levying blackmail in rice and money.

From Chong-ju the advanced guard of the Japanese First Army moves with what briskness it may, first to Seng-cheng, some twenty miles to the westward, and then to Chölsan, to which, it will be remembered, the Cossacks under General Mishtchenko retired on the evening of March 28th. It had been expected that some sharp Russian opposition would be forthcoming at Seng-cheng, but none was encountered, and on the arrival of the advanced guard at Chölsan about April 2nd it must have been pretty evident that there would be no further fighting until the Russian entrenchments at Wi-ju were reached.


THE TORTOISE TOWER,
SEOUL, KOREA.

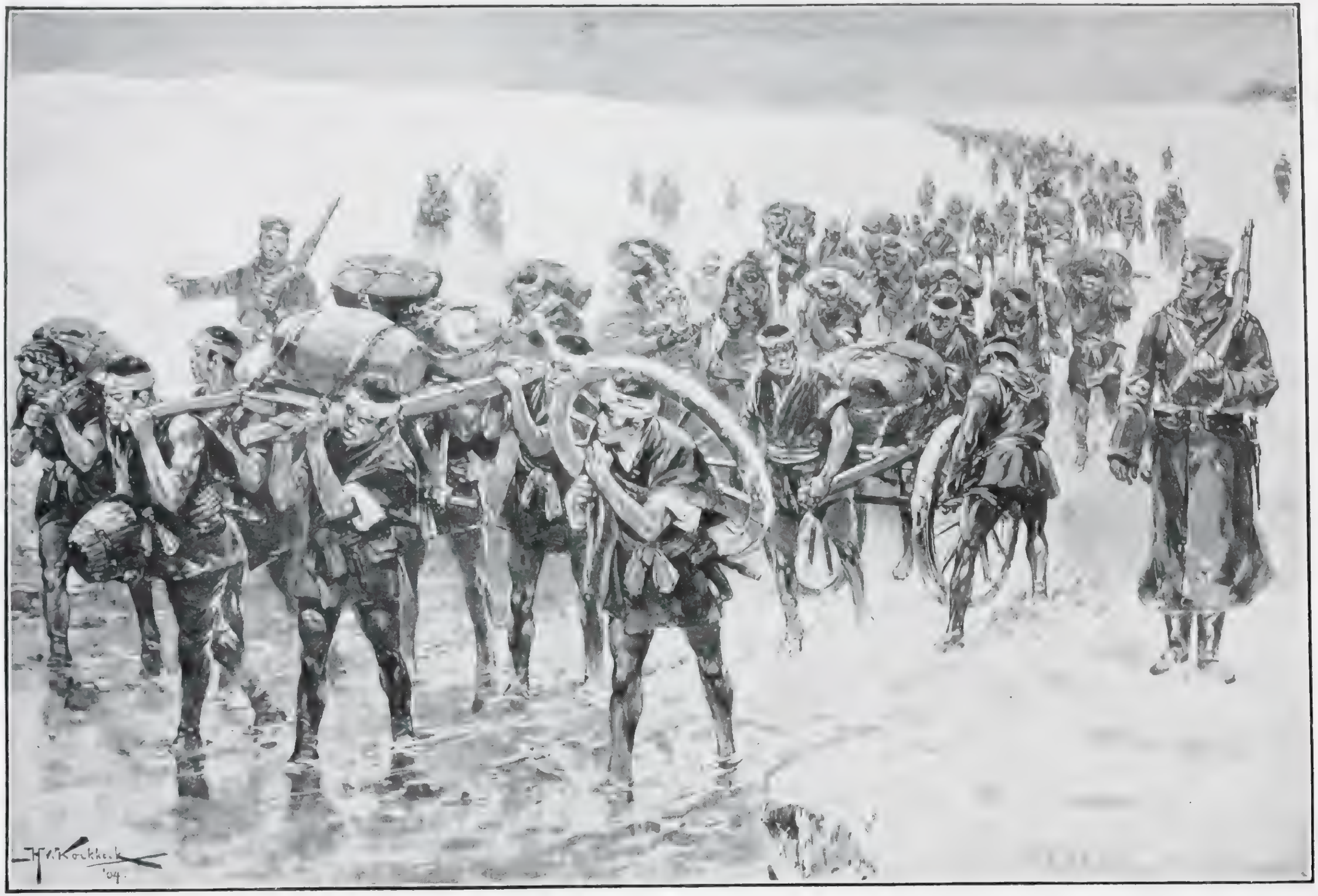
But here, surely, some stand would be made, if only in justification of Russian efforts to strengthen their positions at this point. Those positions would seem to be easily defensible, and, even allowing for the difficulties of a retreat with a river in rear, there is no question as to the moral effect which a stubborn Russian resistance here would have, more especially after such a detrimental engagement as that at Chong-ju. Yet as, on April 4th, the Japanese cavalry scouts approach Wi-ju, which lies on the south bank of the Yalu, close to its mouth, it becomes evident that the Russian posts have been abandoned, and a closer scrutiny reveals the fact that the Russian troops have all retreated across the river!

At first sight the casual reader may not understand the significance of this discovery. The Russians, pressed by a strong advancing Japanese force, have abandoned their intention to hold a position on one bank of a river, and have quietly retired to the other side. That does not seem a great matter, but it is one which assumes a very different aspect when we remember that the river in question forms the north-western boundary of Korea, and that, by retiring across it, the Russians have to all intents evacuated a country which only a few months back they had invaded with the evident hope of making their occupation a permanent one. This entry of the Japanese cavalry into Wi-ju on the morning of April 4th marks a seriously important stage in the land operations of the war, the expulsion of the Russians from the country which, from the first, Japan had made the chief bone of contention between her and her giant rival. Even after their naval reverses at Port Arthur the Russians talked big about an invasion of Korea, and the exploits of the Cossack cavalry in that region were looked forward to with a mixture of happy self-confidence and braggart contempt for the land forces of Japan.

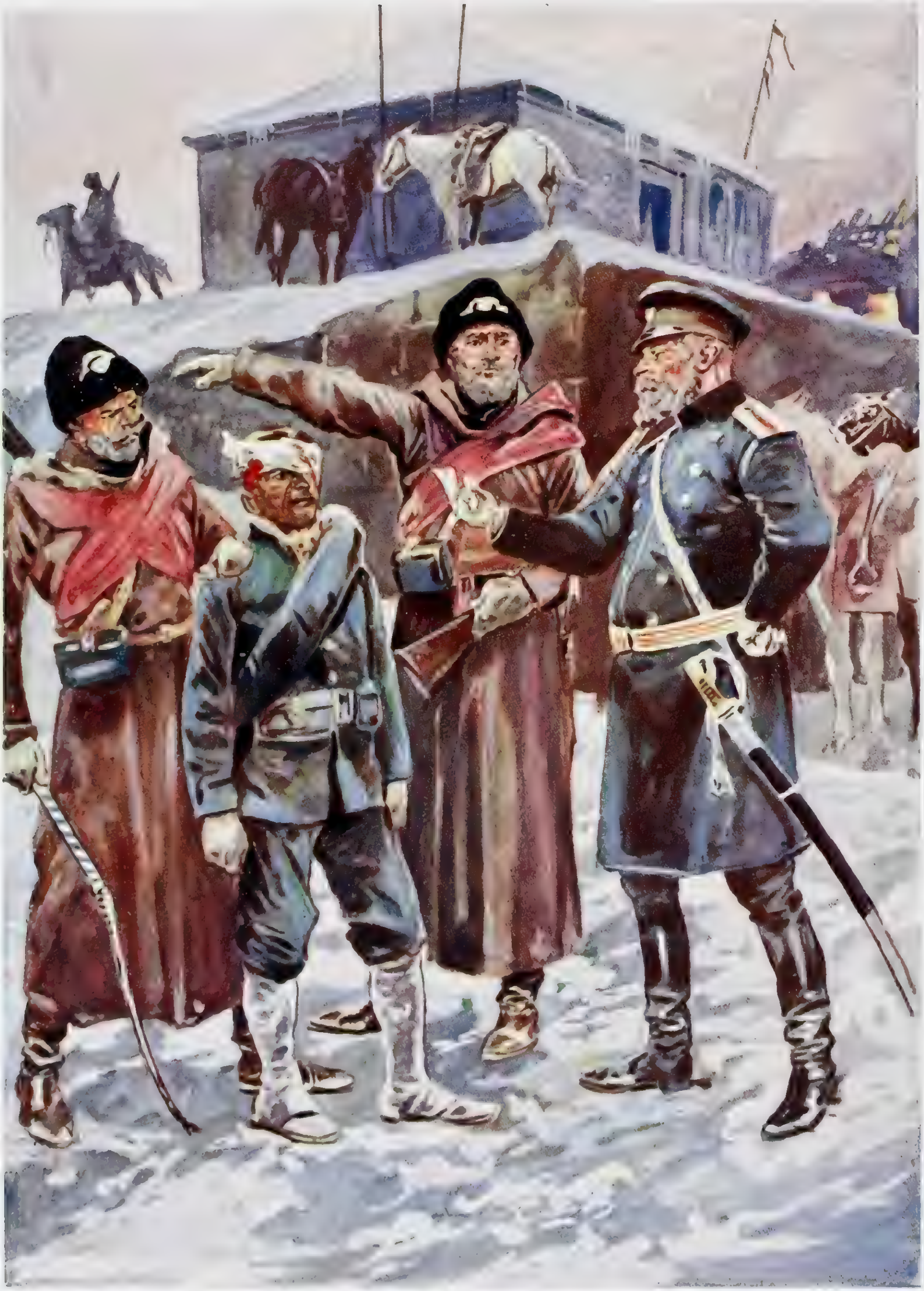
KOREAN NOBLES AT MEAL.

Yet now, less than two months since war broke out, Russia has been simply squeezed out of Korea, and has ce tainly not added to her military reputation in the process, except in so far as the incidental work of the Cossack patrols is concerned. What a different record might have been set up if, at that interesting juncture, when there were only some 300 Japanese troops in Ping-yang, the Russians had made a descent in force, overwhelmed the then puny garrison, and, by holding the place with the utmost tenacity, upset half the arrangements for the great landing at Chinnampo! In justice to the Russian Army, the considerations which were stated on page 136 must not be overlooked, for it is one thing to suggest what might be accomplished easily under favourable considerations, and another to carry it out when troops are stale from hardship, and the question of supplies is one of hourly increasing anxiety. But, even supposing such a *coup* as that indicated had been impracticable, the fact remains that the Russians did nothing to stem, and very little indeed to hinder, the Japanese march northward, and that the record of their movements in Korea from the beginning of March is one of more or less continuous retreat, only varied by the futile performance at Chong-ju.

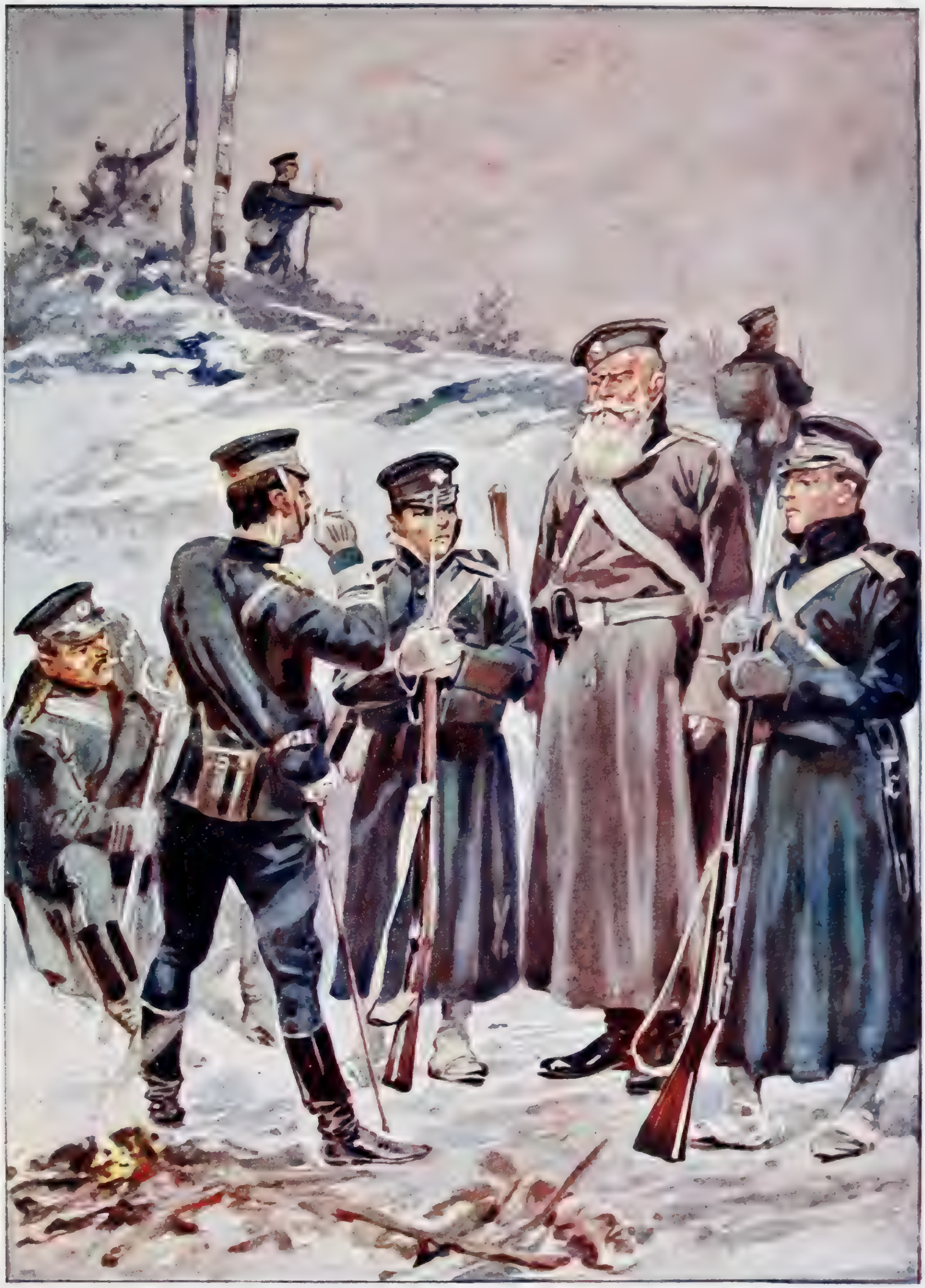
For the Japanese, April 4th is, indeed, a day of triumph, and one can imagine with what solid satisfaction the First Army takes possession of Wi-ju in the knowledge that the occupation means, practically speaking, the complete withdrawal of the enemy from the country. Here is Japan's first manifestation to the civilised world of its military as well as its naval capacity to " stand up to " its huge


H. C. Koekkoek '04.

JAPANESE ON THE MARCH: MEN IN PLACE OF PACK-PONIES AND DRAFT ANIMALS; JINRICKSHA-MEN AS TRAINED TRANSPORT CARRIERS.



LILLIPUT AND BROBDINGNAG: A JAPANESE CAPTURED BY RUSSIANS.



BROBDINGNAG AND LILLIPUT: A RUSSIAN CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE.

adversary. Northern Korea, associated in Japanese military history hitherto with notable defeats of an Eastern enemy, henceforth will shed yet greater lustre on the arms of the Island nation as the scene of the literal expulsion by force of arms of the picked troops of a mighty Western military Power. Whatever gloss may be put upon the circumstances by explanations of strategical necessities, there is no getting over the elementary fact that the Japanese Army on landing found the Russian troops in occupation of a considerable portion of Korea, and that they turned them out. Only one engagement, a trivial one, occurred during the process, and that terminated in the maintenance of the Japanese position, coupled with conviction on the part of most dispassionate observers that the Russians only saved themselves by a timely retreat from very severe handling if not destruction.

While by the arrival of the Japanese advanced guard at Wi-ju a definite stage of the land campaign is reached, and no developments on a large scale are to be immediately expected, the situation is full of interesting points, and productive of some little action, to which we may profitably give attention before breaking the thread of the military narrative.

BUYING THE WAR NEWS—ST. PETERSBURG.

CHAPTER XIII.

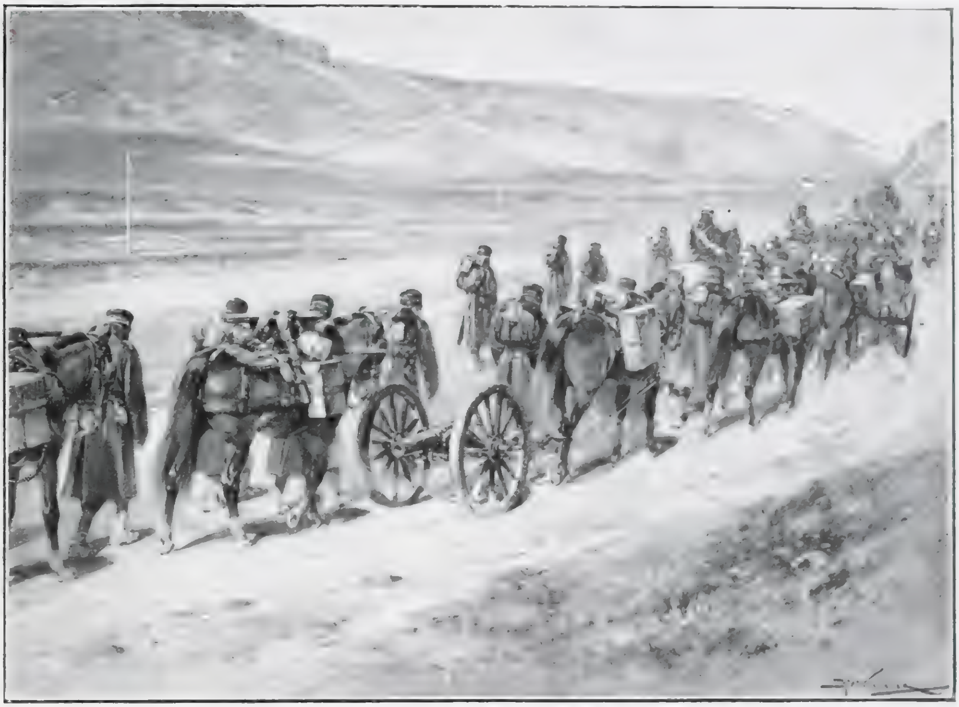
FACE TO FACE ON THE YALU—JAPANESE DELIBERATION—TRANSPORTS IN THE ESTUARY—RUSSIANS PREPARE TO OPPOSE THE PASSAGE—A FIERY BARRIER—A JAPANESE PATROL CUT UP.

"THE Yalu River," writes Admiral Ingles, "is not a second Ganges. People have gained an idea that in the Chinese War battleships and great cruisers went high up the stream, and then they fell to fighting, and that thus we got 'The Battle of the Yalu.' Nothing of the kind. The fight was at sea, and why it has been so called has never been explained. The river is a very broad, very shallow stream, and the longest in the peninsula; its low reaches at this time of year are in flood." The gallant Admiral, from whose vivacious commentary on the naval operations of the war the readers of the *Daily Telegraph* have derived continuous and very pleasantly imparted instruction, goes on to mention that navigation up the Yalu is only possible for a matter of fifty miles from its mouth, and then occurs the first rapid, beyond which even the Chinese do not take the smallest of their junks. Even the estuary is difficult, for, while the Yalu has three mouths at most times of the year, its delta, or islands, are completely submerged during the melting of the snows which occurs at the beginning of April.

The Japanese having arrived on the south bank of this baffling stream are naturally looking forward to crossing it, but there is much to be done before such a proceeding can be even remotely feasible. In the first place a partial concentration, at any rate, of the First Army is necessary. This does not present any particular difficulty now that the Russians have evacuated the south bank of the river, but the process will take time, notwithstanding the elaborate precautions which have been taken to make sure of the communications. There are stores, if not troops, yet to come up from Ping-yang, and, though the rivers have been bridged, notably the Cheng-cheng to the north of An-ju, across which the Japanese have thrown a pontoon bridge 200 yards long, it is not easy to maintain such temporary structures when the streams are in flood through the melting of the snows. As has been already mentioned, the First Army is advancing on Wi-ju by separate routes, and it is not to be expected that in such a country at such a season any uniformity in the rate of marching will be possible All this would tend to delay, even if the Japanese were in any hurry to attempt a passage which any sort of resistance from the opposite bank might render extremely hazardous.

As a matter of fact, the Japanese are not in any violent hurry. The precise nature of their operations at this juncture is a little obscure, but it is reported that a great fleet of transports appears about this time in the estuary of the Yalu, and it is conjectured that on this is carried the Second Army, which may now be landed at Yongampo, a port a little to the west of Wi-ju. Here is indicated an interesting development indeed, and one the significance of which may appear at a later stage. For the present we may be content to confine ourselves to the two banks of the Yalu in actual occupation by the opposing forces, and, by way of a change, may now flit over to the north side, and endeavour to form some idea of the Russian movements.

It appears that, on the retirement of the Russians from Wi-ju across the river, the disposition of the Russian forces on the north bank of the Yalu undergoes some change. It is said that only a small detachment of 250 Cossacks with sixteen guns is now left at An-tung, the greater part of the former garrison of the latter having been withdrawn a few miles up the river to Kiu-lien-cheng. It should be noted that the main road—the Peking road, as it is called—runs from Antung along the river bank to Kiu-lien-cheng, and thence through Feng-hwang-cheng over the Motien Pass to Liao-yang and Mukden. The Russians are said to be using Feng-hwang-cheng as a sort of advanced base for the Yalu operations, but the present intention evidently is to make Kiu-lien-cheng the point of greatest resistance.



A BATTERY OF FIELD GUNS ON THE WAY TO ICHON.

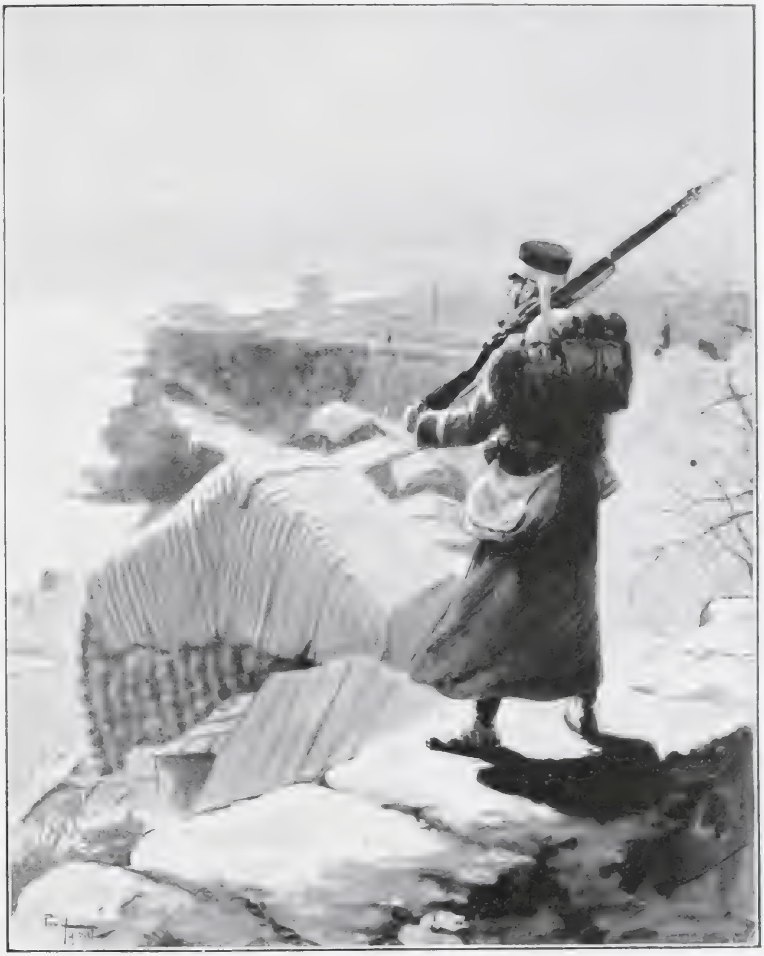
At Kiu-lien-cheng, according to a well-informed *Chronicle* correspondent, there are 3,000 Cossacks, 10,000 infantry, and 3,000 artillery. The river between Kiu-lien-cheng and Wi-ju is three miles wide, with two sandbanks on the Manchurian side, which are occasionally occupied by the Russian sharpshooters. These details are important aids to the comprehension of a very interesting situation. Where two great forces are facing one another with only a river between them, the smallest item of intelligence concerning the strength of the two armies, the most insignificant topographical feature, must not be neglected. For, even if they do not leap into sudden and brilliant prominence, such minutiæ may serve to explain why this or that apparently wise step was not taken by one of the two sides concerned.

Now that they have definitely withdrawn to the north bank of the Yalu, the Russians are evidently bent on pursuing a much more vigorous policy than they adopted during the retirement in front of the Japanese advance from An-ju. Doubtless this is largely due to an added feeling of security, since on this side of the Yalu they are to some extent at home, and have not to be constantly on their guard against both Korean treachery and the possibility of having their retreat cut off by Japanese cavalry. Supplies may not be plentiful, but they are fairly certain, entrenchments are being thrown up on all sides, giving a sense of "something to lean against," and there is talk among the troops of various special devices which may be adopted to prevent the Japanese from attaining any foothold in Manchuria.

One of these is a remarkable appliance which has only recently come to the banks of the Yalu from St. Petersburg. The process is a secret one, but, from tests which were carried out a year or two back during the great Army Manœuvres at Tsarskoë Selo, it is known to result in a tremendous wall of flame which can be produced, even in the middle of a stream, by the agency of a special liquid. The latter is pumped along tubes, which can be buried in the earth, the pumping station being removed some miles, if necessary, from the banks of the river in which it is desired to erect the fiery barrier. In the experiment made at Tsarskoë Selo it is recounted that the proceedings commenced by the construction of a bridge of disused boats. "Then a small, oily patch was seen to appear in the middle of the stream close to the bridge. It gradually grew larger, and at the end of three minutes the patch was 200 yards in length. Flames then burst out, and soon they attained an immense height, constituting a formidable curtain, which completely hid the bridge. . . . After seven and a half minutes the working of the apparatus which caused the fire was stopped, the flames died away in two minutes, and it was seen that the bridge had been completely destroyed."

Time will show whether it will be found possible to work this remarkable engine on the banks of the Yalu, but the fact that the necessary apparatus and materials have been despatched to this point is not without interest, as showing that the Japanese have not by any means the monopoly of up-to-date war devices. Indeed, there are few armies in which greater attention is paid to the application of science to warfare than the Army of the Tsar; and if, so far, there has been no indication of this fact in the conduct of the Russian military operations, the explanation may be that the latter have not been sufficiently developed, and that many of the "newest ideas" have not yet been passed from Harbin to the field army.

But the Russians at Antung and Kiu-lien-cheng are not content with merely throwing up entrenchments, or even with the installation of apparatus to produce lofty screens of fire. They are evidently now being directed by a vigorous mind, and time after time they exchange shots across the river with the Japanese, and in some cases actually cross the river, and come to close quarters with the enemy. Most of these attempts are foiled, but one which is reported by General Kuropatkin to have taken place on the night of April 8th is said to have resulted in a considerable loss of Japanese lives.


ON GUARD: A JAPANESE SENTRY AT PING-YANG

According to the Russian version of this incident, which is not mentioned officially by the Japanese authorities, a Russian detachment of sharpshooters is ordered on the night in question to cross to the left or south bank of the Yalu opposite Wi-ju. It will be remembered that the Japanese cavalry had only arrived at Wi-ju on the 4th, and that consequently on the 8th there is still no large number of troops in occupation of the place. The Russian detachment, which is under the command of Lieutenant Dimidovitch and Sub-Lieutenant Potemkine, begin by crossing first to the Island of Samalind in the river, where they find work ready to their hand that will render any prolongation of their adventurous journey unnecessary.

For in the dim light the Russians discern three boats approaching the east end of the island, and it is presently evident that this is a Japanese patrol of some fifty men, who are clearly bent upon a mission similar to that upon which the Russian detachment is engaged. The latter bides its time until the Japanese have landed, and then opens fire. The result is little less than a massacre, for, according to the Russian official report, nearly all the Japanese are shot, bayoneted, or drowned, and the Russians sustain no losses.

On subsequent occasions the Japanese obtain some compensation for this unfortunate loss, but during the greater part of April nothing occurs to modify seriously the situation on either bank of the Yalu, so far as recorded collisions are concerned. The Russians cross and recross the river, and skirmishes of small importance occur at intervals. But there is no great movement, although the arrival of a number of those stormy petrels, the war correspondents, about the beginning of the third week in April seems to indicate that this will not be long delayed. Meanwhile the naval operations have been progressing briskly, and to these we may now revert, leaving the development of the land campaign to a later chapter.

Photo: Bulla, St. Petersburg.

CZAR REVIEWING A COSSACK REGIMENT.

CHAPTER XIV.

PORT ARTHUR ON THE ALERT—THE RUSSIAN FLEET IN EVIDENCE—RENEWED BOMBARDMENT—ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO SEAL THE HARBOUR—THE SPIRIT OF THE JAPANESE NAVY—A GLORIOUS FAILURE—STIRRING TALES OF HEROISM—EASTER AT PORT ARTHUR.

AFTER the tremendous bombardment of March 10th, of which an account was given in Chapter IX., Port Arthur enjoys for more than a week a welcome rest from attack. The interval is employed by Admiral Makaroff in pushing on the repairs to his fleet, which has sustained considerable damage from the high-angle fire of Admiral Togo's battleships on the 10th, and, of course, the entrance to the harbour continues to be watched with unceasing vigilance. The tension after such a nerve-shaking bombardment is not likely to be released, and it is probably only the stern orders of Admiral Makaroff, and the moral effect of that fine officer's presence, which prevent the waste of much valuable shot and shell on imaginary hostile craft during this period. At night a particularly sharp look-out is kept, the searchlights on either side of the harbour entrance sweeping the intervening space and rendering it impossible for even the smallest boat to pass in unperceived But, naturally, the main object of those who work these mechanical sentinels is to discover the enemy out at sea, since, if a destroyer steaming nearly thirty knots is not discovered until abreast of the forts, there is, as has been already evidenced, a chance of her dashing into the inner harbour, wreaking mischief there, and emerging unscathed.

At midnight on March 21st the vigilance of the fort garrisons is partially rewarded. A searchlight beam thrown out to sea shows two Japanese destroyers creeping up under cover of hoped-for darkness towards the outer roadstead. Such a discovery after ten days of incessant watching means much, and there is, perhaps, rather more fuss made over the circumstance than is, strictly speaking, necessary. In cooler moments, perhaps, a wiser policy would have permitted a somewhat closer approach, followed by a carefully directed fire, or attempted interception by a superior force of Russian destroyers, of which there are doubtless several actually under steam for patrolling purposes. But nerves are nerves, and the Russians have good reason to nip in the bud any such enterprise on the part of the Japanese. So with a roar the guns in the forts hurl their greeting at the oncoming intruders, and two gunboats, the *Bobr* and the *Otvajny*, join in the noisy performance. The destroyers, belonging, as it subsequently appears, to one of the two Japanese flotillas, both of which are at this moment outside Port Arthur, are forced to retire, but are not injured by the Russian fire.

At about four o'clock in the morning three more Japanese destroyers make their appearance, and these, too, are met with such a storm of shell that they, in turn, give up as hopeless the attempt to run the gauntlet of the forts.

Four hours later the main Japanese

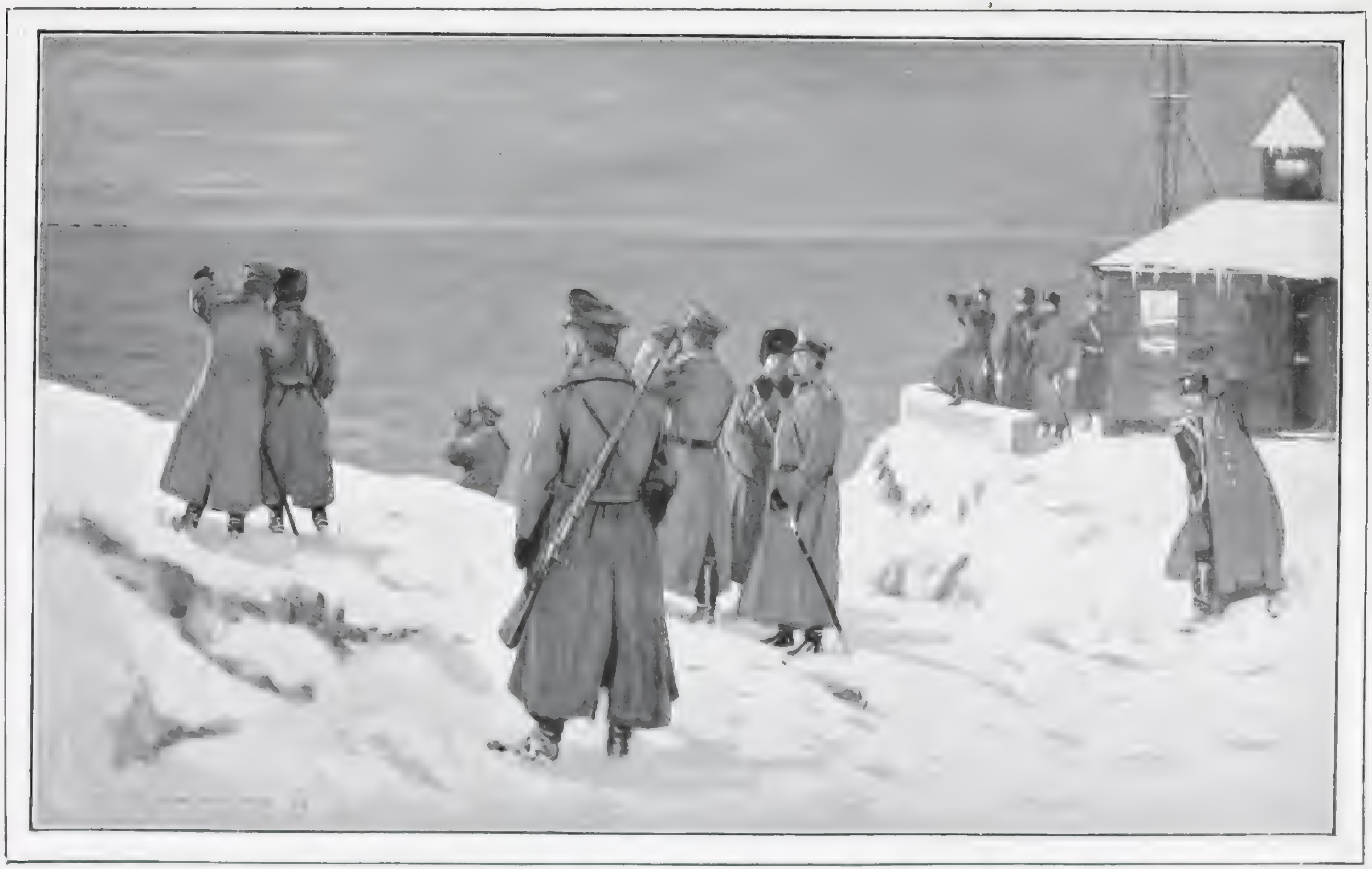
fleet is seen approaching Port Arthur. The Russians may well feel some pangs of disappointment and irritation as they note the unimpaired strength of this massive force, with its six battleships, six armoured cruisers, six second- and third-class cruisers, and eight destroyers. Here is indicated no diminution of Japan's naval strength, and, clearly, if in previous engagements or bombardments her fleet has suffered damage, it has been speedily and effectively repaired. It is fortunate that there are now comparatively few civilian inhabitants left in Port Arthur. Even for the sailors and soldiers who form the garrison the prospect of the next few hours is not a particularly pleasant one, for another bombardment is clearly intended, there is every chance that it will be skilfully conducted, and not much hope that it can be usefully replied to.

Yet Admiral Makaroff rises finely to the occasion. As soon as the enemy's ships are descried on the horizon, he gives an order which must cause something of a thrill among all concerned. The Russian Fleet is to weigh anchor and leave the harbour! The process commences at seven o'clock, the cruisers leading, with the *Askold*, flying Admiral Makaroff's flag, at their head, and the battleships following. It is afterwards reported by Admiral Togo himself that, during the bombardment, there are five Russian battleships, four cruisers, and several destroyers outside Port Arthur, and this circumstance cannot but reflect the very highest credit upon the Russian Admiral. The latter's flag is hoisted on a cruiser which a few weeks back lay sinking in the inner harbour, several of the battleships have been hardly less seriously damaged, and yet Makaroff has not only a respectable squadron at his disposal, but, further, like the brave and sagacious sailor that he is, prefers to move them out into the roadstead rather than leave them inside the harbour, whence they can only fire blindly at the enemy. In the history of naval warfare the extraordinary vigour displayed by Admiral Makaroff in patching up a terribly knocked about squadron, and his resolute exit from Port Arthur at its head on March 22nd, will always rank as an interesting performance, and one not without its lesson to those who underrate the difficulty of putting a well-built warship permanently out of action.

We left Admiral Togo bringing his splendid fleet within long range of Port Arthur, and have now to note his arrangements for the coming bombardment. This time he despatches part of the fleet in the direction of Pigeon Bay, which, as will be seen from the bird's-eye view of Port Arthur on page 106, lies on the west side of the Liau-ti-shan peninsula, a little to the north of the Light-house. The battleships *Fuji* and *Yashima* are ordered to make an indirect bombardment from the direction of Liau-ti-shan against the inner side of the port, and only 12-inch guns are to be used.

The bombardment lasts until after noon, and one hundred shells are fired at Port Arthur, and about the same number at the environs of the town. The Russian battleships return the fire over the Liau-ti-shan promontory, and make very fair practice, for many of their shells fall near the *Fuji*, without, however, doing any damage.

At three o'clock the Japanese Fleet withdraws, having, it is said, knocked some more holes in the forts, and destroyed certain electrical works in connection with the searchlights. The



"THE JAPANESE ARE COMING!": A SCENE AT THE SIGNAL STATION ON GOLDEN HILL AT PORT ARTHUR latter object, if achieved, is a useful one, but in a place so well stocked with machinery as Port Arthur, the searchlights are not likely to be all dependent on one source of supply, and in any case the loss is not irreparable. In fine, the actual mischief done does not appear commensurate with the effort made, unless it be true that the Japanese in the recent bombardments have been firing Russian shells which they have appropriated from a Russian transport.

Another, but a shorter, respite for the much-tried Port Arthur garrison follows, and it is not until the early morning of Sunday, March 27th, that the enemy reappears. It is only half-past three, and it is still dark when a flotilla of Japanese destroyers is revealed at about two miles from the harbour entrance in company with four steamers, each of about 2,000 tons burthen.

It will enable the succeeding narrative to be easily followed and understood if at this point we hie back to the attempt made on February 24th, and described in Chapter V., to seal up Port Arthur by sinking old merchant vessels at the entrance. That attempt, it will be remembered, failed, but the result was by no means discouraging. At any rate, Admiral Togo thinks the experiment worth repeating, and there are hundreds of willing volunteers for the dangerous duty of piloting the "sinkers" to their places. It is said that on the last occasion 2,000 Japanese bluejackets offered themselves, sending in their applications written, according to an old Samurai custom, in their own blood. There is plenty of the same spirit left, and, when it becomes known that another attempt is to be made, those who escaped on the last occasion by the skin of their teeth now clamour to be re-employed, and passionately urge their "claims" to be selected. Admiral Togo gives way as regards the officers, whose precise knowledge of the exact spots to be picked out for sinking the next batch of ships is naturally valuable. But fresh crews of petty officers and men are chosen, and some modification is made as regards the class of merchantmen selected. Evidently with a view to giving those concerned in the attempt a better chance of working to the right spots, ships not quite so old are prepared for the operation, and on one of them a Hotchkiss quick-firer is placed in the hope of doing a little extra damage at the outset to a Russian destroyer. The names of the merchantmen selected are *Chiyo Maru*, *Fukui Maru*, *Yahiko Maru*, and *Yoneyma Maru*.

As some indication of the spirit animating the Japanese Navy in these daredevil attempts, we may usefully borrow from a Japanese newspaper the report of an impressive scene which preceded the departure on one of the "sinkers" of a contingent of five volunteers selected from the crew of the *Asama*. In the presence of all the crew, assembled on the upper deck, Captain Yatsushiro brought out a large silver bowl presented to him by the Crown Prince. He filled it with water, drank with each of the five volunteers, and made a speech, of which the following is an official translation:—

"In ordering you to this mission, which will almost certainly be fatal, I feel as I would if I were sending my beloved children to their death. Yet had I a hundred children, I could not but wish that they might all have the privilege of going upon such an heroic errand, or had I but one child I would equally desire that he might be chosen to face death in the performance of such a glorious duty. You, my brave comrades, have been chosen for this duty, and I adjure you to work, even when wounded and maimed, still work to the end. Above all, never fail in strict and prompt obedience to the orders of your commander. I do not need to say that you should be ready to give your lives for honour and duty, and that while you should not think of gaining fame by sacrificing yourselves needlessly, you should not shrink from death in the performance of duty. I give you wine to take with you, not to be drunk for the stimulation of your courage, but solely for use in case of wounds or injury. Remember, you represent the *Asama*, and do not forget that it would be a disgrace to have it said that men from the *Asama* risked their lives under the incitement of wine. I shall long for the glorious moment when you may return to us, if the Almighty so decrees, after the successful fulfilment of your duty, and when we may testify our joy by drinking to you in the wine you now take with you. Go, therefore, my brave comrades, with perfect faith in the grace of heaven and courageous submission to the will of God, perform with serene confidence the task entrusted to you."

Photo: R. J. W. Haines.

OFFICERS AND CREW OF THE *ASAMA.*

The united Japanese squadron leaves

its base for Port Arthur on March 26th, the merchantmen being escorted by a flotilla consisting of the destroyers *Shirakumo*, *Kasumi*, *Asashio*, *Akatsuki*, *Akebono*, *Oboro*, *Inazuma*, *Ikadzuchi*, *Usugomo*, *Sazanami*, and *Shimonome*, and the torpedo-boats *Karigane*, *Aodaka*, *Misasagi*, *Tsubame*, *Managuru*, and *Hato*. The moon is shining during the earlier hours of the night, but towards midnight it is obscured, and it is in utter darkness that, in the immediate neighbourhood of Port Arthur, the four merchantmen and the torpedo flotilla alone advance towards the harbour entrance.

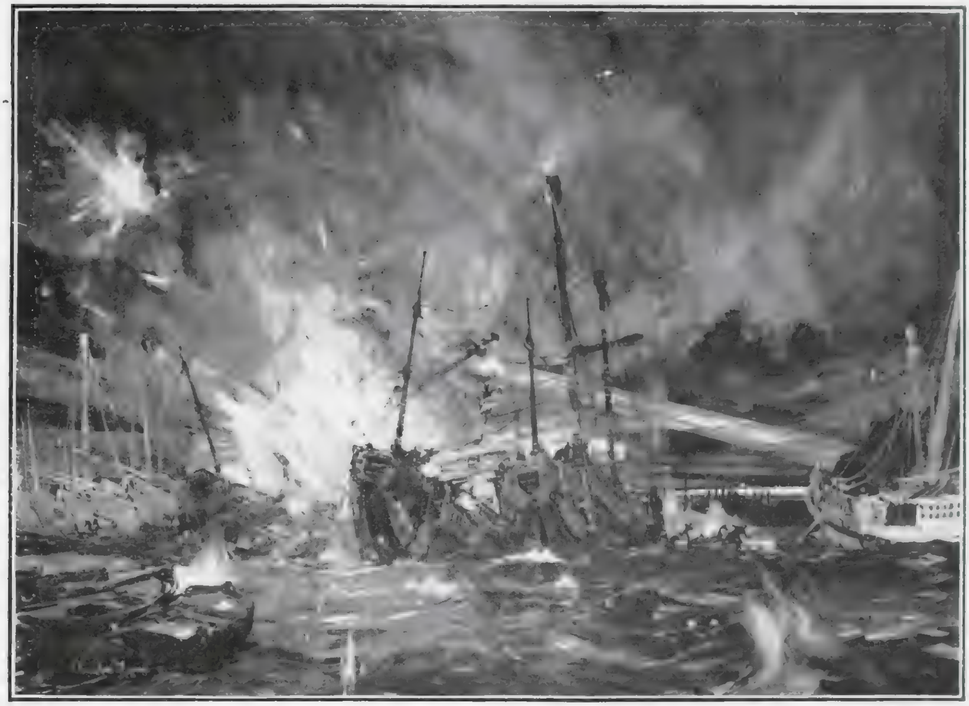
The great searchlight on Golden Hill is working, and at about two miles from the entrance the white streak falls upon the intruders. To use the words of the graphic narrative furnished by the *Times* correspondent, the Russian watch is roused to suspicion, the searchlight beam sweeps backwards and forwards in frenzied agitation, the surprise is at an end. A solitary gun flashes, and immediately the garrison and land batteries spring to the guns.

"In three minutes," says the writer quoted, "the Japanese craft are enclosed in a semi-circle of gun flashes as the concentrated fire of the forts and the picket destroyers pours into them. The sea all round is churned into a turmoil by the striking shell. But there is no hesitation. The torpedo escort opens out to allow the transports through. The officers of the latter, their eyes glued to their points, with the men standing to their stations at the lifeboats, steer directly into the inferno of screaming, rushing shell-fire."

The *Chiyo Maru* leads the way, and, with the searchlight full upon her, and amid a hail of shell, makes for the eastern entrance, and casts anchor about 100 yards from the western beach of Golden Hill. The fuse is set, the crew and the engineers clamber into the lifeboat, and a few minutes after they have pushed off the charge in the hold explodes, and the *Chiyo Maru* sinks in the appointed place.

The *Fukui Maru* steers to the left of the *Chiyo Maru*, and is about to anchor well in the fairway when she is met by the Russian destroyer *Silni*, and torpedoed. A warrant officer named Sugino is actually below setting the fuse when the Russian torpedo strikes the steamer, and he is killed by the explosion. In charge of the *Fukui Maru* is Commander Hirose, who distinguished himself by his cool gallantry in sinking the *Hokoku Maru* on the occasion of the previous attempt to block the harbour. He took the *Hokoku Maru* furthest up the entrance to Port Arthur, and, when the ship was beginning to sink, he remembered that he had left his sword on the bridge, and returned and secured it, just escaping the suction as the ship sank. For his fine display of courage on that occasion he was promoted Commander, and he now proceeds, at the cost of his life, to win fresh laurels by an act of still more splendid heroism.

The *Fukui Maru* is settling visibly after the torpedo explosion, and Commander Hirose has given the word to his crew to take to the lifeboat. He then discovers that Sugino is not present, and three times he searches through the sinking ship for the missing warrant-officer. At last, finding the endeavour hopeless, he joins the others in the boat. But the delay has been dangerous, and the boat rows away under a hot fire from the enemy. A shell strikes the gallant officer on the head, and the greater part of his body is blown away, only a mangled portion of flesh remaining in the boat. This mournful relic of a glorious deed is afterwards interred in Japan with much ceremonial, and the name of Hirose remains ennobled in the fighting annals of his country. It is a gracious supplement to this record that, when the Russians subsequently found what was believed to be Commander Hirose's body, they buried it with full naval honours, mindful both of the heroism of the deceased and of a similar act of respect performed by the Japanese towards the dead bodies found on the Russian *Varyag* after the action off Chemulpo.



INNOCENT VICTIMS OF THE BOMBARDMENT AT PORT ARTHUR: JAPANESE SHELL FALLING AMONG CHINESE FISHING-BOATS IN THE HARBOUR.

Reverting to the actual work in hand, the *Yahiko Maru* steers to the left of the *Fukui Maru* and blows up. Hitherto all has passed off as arranged, in spite of the vigorous opposition encountered. Although two Russian gunboats and a destroyer are engaged, in addition to the forts, three out of the four merchantmen have been steadily guided to the points selected, and successfully sunk either by their own crews or with the enemy's assistance. But now a hitch occurs. The *Yoneyma Maru* reaches the harbour entrance and fouls the stern of the Russian destroyer. The latter opens fire with a six-pounder, and at such close quarters are the two vessels that the Japanese are actually scorched by the flame of the discharge. Notwithstanding this collision, the *Yoneyma Maru* succeeds in gaining the middle of the fairway, when she is struck by an enemy's torpedo. The momentum brings her towards the left shore, and she sinks sideways, with her bows towards the western side of the entrance. This means that a considerable space is still left between the *Yahiko Maru* and the *Yoneyma Maru*, and that, to this extent, the attempt to block the entrance has failed. There can, however, be no question as to the ability with which the plan was conceived, or the magnificent steadiness and superb self-devotion with which it was carried out.

Among the various incidents of this stirring performance the tale of the gallant deed of Lieutenant Masaki, who commanded the *Yoneyma Maru*, deserves to be specially mentioned as a pendant to Commander Hirose's splendid endeavour to save Sugino. The story is finely told by Mr. Douglas Young, the special correspondent of the *Daily Express*, who interviewed, at Kobe, some of the men who took part in the sinking of the merchantmen. Mr. Young first mentions that Masaki was struck on the ear by a splinter just as his ship was entering the Port Arthur roadstead. He still stuck to his post on the bridge, and after fouling the *Silni*—the Jap sailors say he tried to run her down—he was thrown out of his course. According to Admiral Togo's report, just quoted, this was due to the momentum given to the vessel by a torpedo, and the account given by Mr. Young differs in this and one or two other details which, however, are not essential. As the *Yoneyma Maru* struggled on, "the forts on Golden Hill opened fire on the doomed merchantman, while the men on board got everything ready to blow her up when she reached the desired position. At this moment Lieutenant Shimada was hit by a shell, and fell desperately wounded. Masaki, with blood streaming from his shattered face, proceeded to anchor. Then a Russian shell hit the funnel, smashing it to pieces. Masaki was struck again by a splinter in the shoulder, but he manfully held to his command.

"Everything was now ready for blowing up the vessel. The crew took to the boats, Lieutenant Masaki being the last to leave. They were clear away when the intrepid commander decided to recover the supposed corpse of Lieutenant Shimada. He returned to the *Yoneyma Maru*, and found that his comrade was still living.

"Amid shouts of encouragement, he placed the wounded man in a small boat, and rowing with his uninjured arm, with Shimada's head resting on his knee, succeeded in rejoining the other boats. A few minutes later the *Yoneyma Maru* blew up, while the Japanese sang a war song.

"This singing nearly proved their undoing, for, guided by the sound, the Russians discovered the whereabouts of the boats, and poured in a volley of shot and shell.

"But the gallant Japs escaped, and, successfully keeping out of the beams of the Russian searchlights, drifted about until, guided by their war song, a Japanese torpedo-boat picked them up."

It is a complete marvel that any of the crews of the sunk merchantmen should have escaped. The actual casualty list includes Commander Hirose and three petty officers, including Sugino, killed; a lieutenant mortally wounded; and a lieutenant, an engineer, and six petty officers and men slightly wounded. All the rest of the crews are safely picked up by the Japanese destroyers which, throughout the proceedings, have been displaying signal daring in support of the attempt to sink the merchantmen. Notably the *Aodaka* and *Tsubame* merit and receive the special commendation of Admiral Togo by penetrating to within about a mile from the harbour entrance. Here they encounter the Russian destroyer *Silni*, into whose boilers a Japanese shell finds its way, causing a violent escape of steam and the subsequent stranding of the vessel on a reef.

At daybreak the Japanese torpedo flotilla withdraws to the shelter of the main Japanese fleet, which is waiting ten miles away. One can imagine the interest with which Admiral Togo receives the report of his brave assistants, and the pride, mingled with a shade of disappointment, with which he listens to the stirring tale of a fine piece of work all but successfully accomplished. It is noteworthy that in dealing with this particular attempt Admiral Togo's own report is singularly full and detailed. In reference to most of his own impressive performances the Admiral has hitherto been curiously laconic. "As previously arranged, the fleet arrived at Port Arthur on such-and-such a date, and bombarded it from — a.m. to — p.m. Our ships sustained no damage," is the gist of most of Togo's previous communications. But in dealing with the attempts to block the harbour entrance, and particularly with this one, the Admiral "lets himself go" a little, and becomes quite enthusiastic, more particularly with reference to Commander Hirose. Evidently the whole performance is one which appeals to him strongly. He is further, of course, not unmindful of the desirableness of encouraging officers and men on whom he may yet again have to call for similar displays of reckless courage and cool steadiness.

While the Japanese emerge from this morning's work covered with glory, and rejoicing in some measure of success, the Russians have much to their credit both in the matter of vigilance, and by reason of a very fine individual exhibition of fighting quality. When the enemy's torpedo flotilla and the accompanying merchantmen were discovered by the searchlight on Golden Hill, there were two gunboats the *Bobr* and *Otvajny*, and the destroyer *Silni*, on guard duty. The two former, which had taken the place of the battleship *Retvisan*, joined with the forts in shelling the intruders, but the *Silni*, commanded by Lieutenant Krinitzki, took a still more active part. As has already been noted, this vessel ran out to meet the merchantmen, and torpedoed first the *Fukui Maru*, and afterwards the *Yoneyma Maru*, preventing by the latter proceeding the full accomplishment of the Japanese design. Subsequently the *Silni* found itself opposing single-handed the bulk of the enemy's torpedo flotilla, and eventually, as we have seen, she came to grief in an encounter with the *Aodaka* and *Tsubame*. Lieutenant Krinitzki, though wounded, stuck manfully to his post, and eventually succeeded in getting off his stranded vessel and entering the harbour.

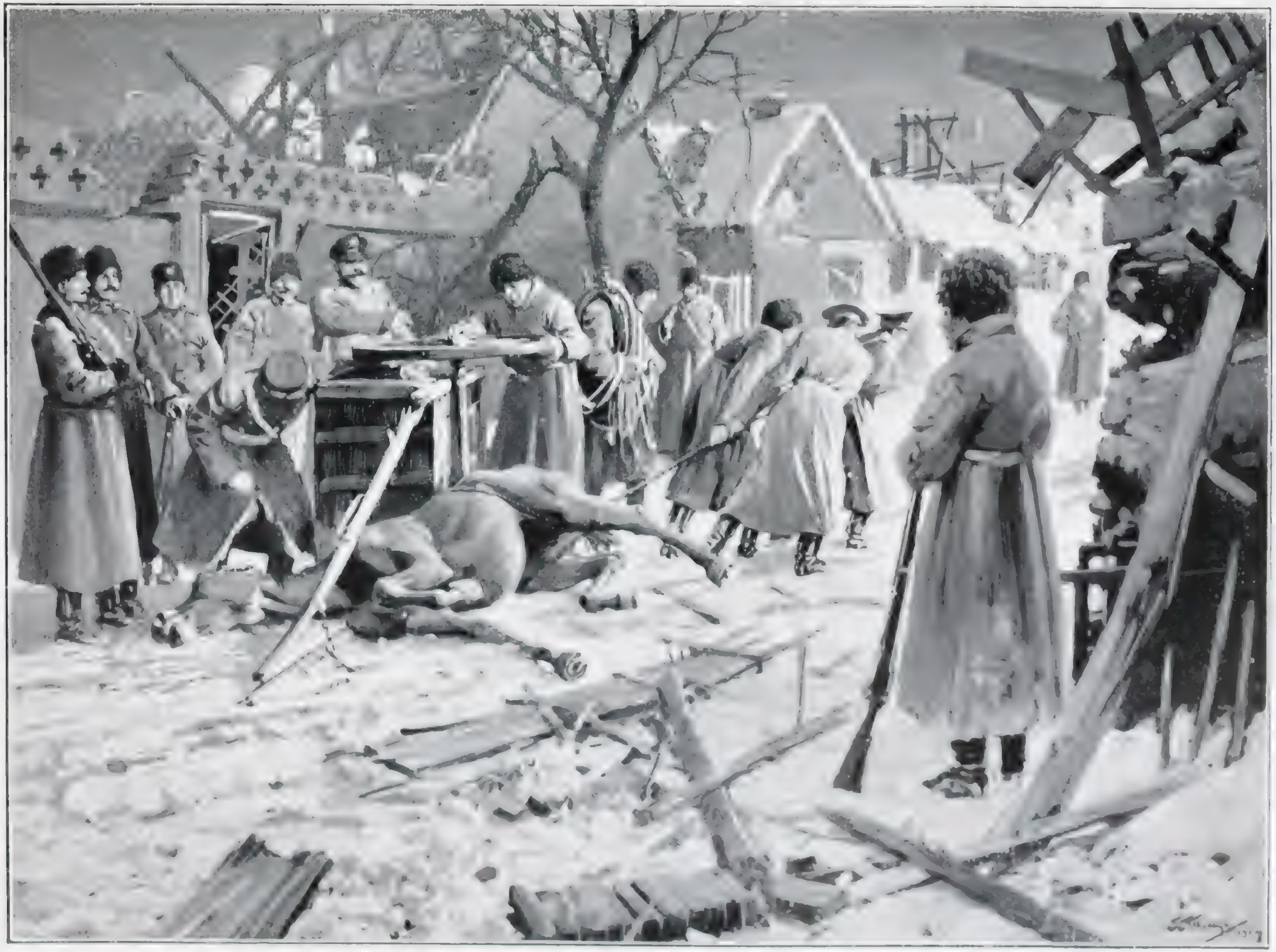
About half-past five on the morning of March 27th the Japanese fleet approached the Port Arthur roadstead, doubtless in order to verify the reports concerning the sunk steamers. The forts on the "Tiger's Tail" opened fire, and the Russian Fleet also steamed out boldly, lined up in the roadstead at about nine o'clock, and fired a few shots at the enemy, who presently drew off in a south-easterly direction, and by ten had disappeared from the horizon.

On March 29th the garrison of Port Arthur celebrated the sixth anniversary of the Russian occupation, the day being marked by a religious service and a military review. There have been a good many military reviews held, especially by Russian troops, in this great stronghold of the Far East, but none, perhaps, more suggestive of a strange variety of reflections than this. Yet we may be sure that no trace of apprehension as to the future, no diminution of soldierly pride, no lack of parade smartness coupled with the hard-set look of fighting efficiency which comes of a considerable spell of active service, is observable among the Russian troops on this memorable occasion. Pride and self-confidence hall-mark Russian military ceremonial at all times, and in such circumstances as these it is the clear duty of all concerned to present as brave and impressive an appearance as if the Great White Tsar himself were commanding in person.

THE GREAT WHITE TSAR.

Yet there are constant anxieties. Admiral Makaroff, in spite of his gallant bearing, is subject to them, and personally supervises every night the measures taken to prevent a surprise. Repeatedly he sleeps in his clothes, and on Easter Eve he spends the night in a guard-boat, as there is strong belief, subsequently proved to be groundless, that a great Japanese attack will be delivered that evening. The usual Easter night service in the church is held, but the windows of the building are carefully blocked, and after the service those who have attended it must find their way to their homes in utter darkness.

The incidental gossip of Port Arthur



A DUMB VICTIM: THE EFFECT OF A SHELL AT PORT ARTHUR during this period is not without interest, and comprises a number of incidents, grave and gay, which indicate the presence of a certain amount of movement and interchange of ideas. The local paper, the *Novi Krai*, still makes its appearance, but begs to be excused for occasional irregularity, owing to a tendency on the part of the Chinese, who work the presses, to fly for shelter as soon as a bombardment begins. That the *Novi Krai*, in spite of such drawbacks, can provide capital descriptive fare, may be gathered from the following extract from its columns, sent by Reuter's correspondent at St. Petersburg as a testimony to the behaviour of the cruiser *Bayan* during the bombardment of March 22nd :—

" The bursting shells bowled over man after man until the decks were slippery with blood. Amidst this hell the captain stood unmoved in the conning tower, calmly telephoning his orders to the captains of the guns. His wonderful coolness had a remarkable influence on all the officers.

" The cockpit was soon crowded with wounded, thirty-nine men being brought down before the fight ended.

" Amid the crash of the guns, the hiss of the flying projectiles, and the thunder of their explosions, the smashing of splinters, and the din of the working engines, the surgeons laboured quietly among the wounded on the hospital operating table. Although some of the men suffered frightful agony, few groans were heard, in spite of the fact that anæsthetics were only administered in one case.

" When the battle ended and the enemy began to draw off, the officers on the bridge cheered. The cheering extended down to the hold, the stokers and even the wounded joining in. The captain signalled ' Full speed ahead ! ' after the retreating Japanese, but he had not gone far before the flagship signalled the *Bayan* to return."

Here is another little bit of local talk about that same bombardment, which is not without interest. When the Russian squadron was returning to port after its sortie, repeated rifle shots were heard in the direction of Pigeon Bay, and Admiral Makaroff, thinking that probably the Japanese were attempting a landing there, sent a messenger hurriedly to make inquiries. It transpired that the sounds of firing came from some ranges at which a Russian battalion commandant was calmly putting his men through rifle practice, " without paying any attention whatever to the bombardment ! "

The Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* tells a very romantic story with a tragic ending, which must have been current about this time in Port Arthur. Among the men of a Siberian regiment stationed here " was a soldier named Liatnikoff, who was popular with his comrades, but was often ' chaffed ' about his effeminate appearance. He had been selected as servant by a young officer at whose quarters he lodged. One unlucky day, while he was on an errand, he fell and broke a leg. Liatnikoff expressed a very strong wish not to be taken to the hospital, and as he was being conveyed thither he took a penknife out of his pocket and deliberately severed an artery in his left arm. As the soldier on his arrival there was being undressed to be put to bed the surgeons, to their amazement, perceived that he was not what he had represented himself to be. Liatnikoff, in fact, was a beautiful girl barely eighteen years of age. Blood-poisoning supervened, and the patient had only been three days in the hospital when all hope of recovery had to be abandoned. The young woman sent for the officer in whose service she had been, and implored him to marry her, reminding him that it was her devotion to him which had led her to pass herself off as a man in order that she might follow him to the Far East. His brother officers are also said to have pleaded her cause, but for some unexplained reason he would not listen to them. As soon, however, as he had heard of the death of the poor girl who had loved him so well, he returned to his quarters and blew out his brains."

On March 31st Admiral Alexeieff pays a brief visit to Port Arthur, and is received in great state by Admiral Makaroff, Generals Stoessel and Smirnoff, and all the civil and military authorities. He visits the warships *Petropavlosk*, *Pallada*, *Retvisan*, and *Tsarevitch*, and presents the captains of the *Bayan*, *Novik*, and *Askold* with gold swords of honour, adorned with the ribbon of the Order of St. George, and the inscription "For Gallantry."

Easter and the first week of April at Port Arthur thus pass without untoward occurrence, and with doubtless some tendency to restored confidence on the part of the garrison. Admiral Makaroff is proving the saviour of a situation which looked far gloomier in some respects a few weeks back than it does now. What he has done at Port Arthur, too, is evidently appreciated at home, for strenuous efforts are being made to comply with his request for more torpedo craft, which are being despatched in sections by the railway, and with the help of which the gallant Admiral may possibly some dark night succeed in levelling Admiral Togo's fleet with his own. At any rate, there is no harm in hoping, and hopefulness reigns accordingly. But one of Fate's great ironies is in store for Port Arthur, which is soon to be sadly awakened from its passing dream of an early triumph for its unfortunate squadron.

ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF REVIEWING TROOPS AT PORT ARTHUR.

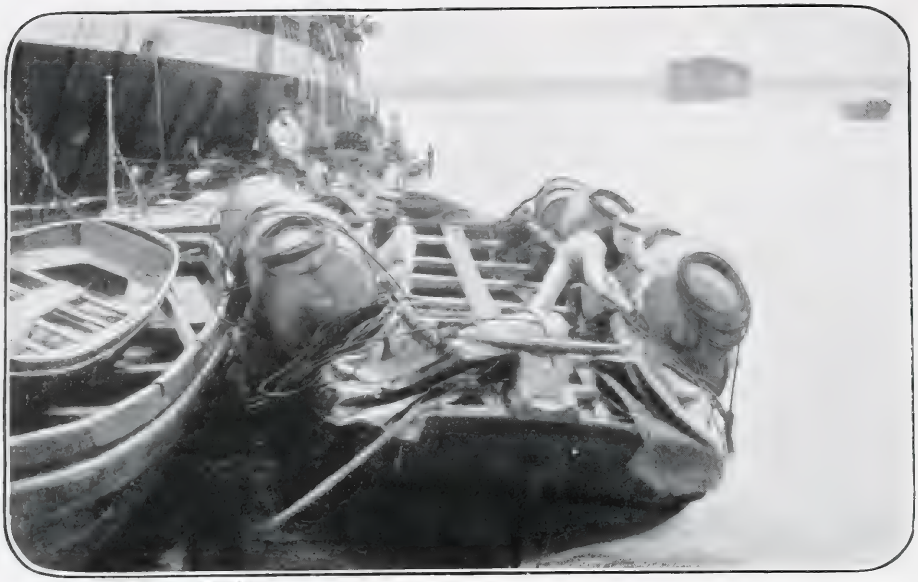


Photo: C. Cozens, Southsea.

LINE OF SIX OBSERVATION MINES READY FOR LAYING OUT. THE MEN ARE JOINING UP THE ELECTRIC CABLE

CHAPTER XV.

MINING AT MIDNIGHT—A SKILFUL RUSE—THE RUSSIAN FLEET DECOYED OUT TO SEA—AN EXCITING CHASE—AN AWFUL CATASTROPHE—A FEARFUL BLOW FOR RUSSIA—A THREE DAYS' ENGAGEMENT

AT midnight, on April 12th, sleepers at Port Arthur are awakened by the now familiar roar of cannon, which betokens the detection by the searchlights of a hostile approach at the entrance to the harbour. Many have now become so accustomed to these alarms that they treat the disturbance with comparative indifference, although to the older heads in the garrison it may occur that of late the attentions of the Japanese Fleet have been growing increasingly serious, and that possibly here may be the beginning of that grand attack which was foreshadowed for Easter, and which, in any case, is not likely to be long delayed.

In the forts themselves the excitement is undoubtedly keen. Four searchlights are working, and the scene which they partially reveal is one which is highly suggestive of a more than usually vigorous attempt on the part of the enemy to wreak some particular mischief on Port Arthur. In all there are, perhaps, a dozen torpedo craft within the space swept by the searchlights—from the official Japanese report it appears that three flotillas, two of destroyers and one of torpedo boats, were engaged in this enterprise—and with them is a much larger vessel, which is evidently engaged on some special business, though precisely what it is not easy to discover amid all the fuss and fury that are now raging. Shells by scores are dropping into the water all round this vessel as she moves swiftly about the roadstead, but she bears a charmed life, for she is evidently undamaged when, her mysterious errand accomplished, she runs out to sea.

Anticipating the official reports, it may now conveniently be stated that this strange visitor which has ventured thus boldly—for her bulk is considerable, and it is said that the concentrated beams of the four searchlights show up her every spar and rail—is a new addition to the Navy of Japan, the *Koryo Maru*, a torpedo transport of 2,700 tons. Her description and her present mission correspond with those of the ill-fated *Yenisei*, the Russian ship which sank on February 11th at the entrance to Talien Bay.

For the work on which the *Koryo Maru* has been engaged is that of laying mines under the special direction of Captain Oda, who was recently decorated by the Mikado for his invention of a process said to increase greatly the efficiency of these instruments. Incidentally it may be mentioned that, according to the Tokio correspondent of the *Daily Express*, the mines carried on board the *Koryo Maru* are filled with an explosive purely Japanese in origin, claimed to be far more powerful than lyddite, mélinite, or any other existing explosive, and to be effective under conditions in which most explosives are useless. It is the invention of a former professor at the Tokio University, Dr. Shimose, who devoted twenty years to experimental work in connection with explosives, and whose name, with that of Captain Oda, certainly deserves record in connection with the episode of which the *Koryo Maru's* performance at Port Arthur is the opening chapter.

Before leaving the *Koryo Maru* it must be noticed that her commander's work, like that of the heroes who sunk the merchantmen, has been most methodically and skilfully carried out, in spite of the terrific fire to which she has been subjected. On previous occasions the Japanese have made most careful observations of the manner in which the Russian ships have left and re-entered the harbour, and they have come to the conclusion that a certain course is habitually steered in order to avoid the mines which the Russians themselves have laid for the protection of the entrance. The *Koryo Maru* naturally takes equal care to shun the Russian mine area, but she leaves several deadly mementoes of her own visit along the course which the Russian vessels have been seen to steer. One mine in particular is dropped to the south-east of Golden Hill, a mile outside the harbour entrance.

After the *Koryo Maru* has run out again to sea, one of the destroyer flotillas, which has been covering her performance, discovers, towards morning, a Russian destroyer, the *Strasny*, which is evidently making for Port Arthur from Dalny. The Fates are unkind indeed to this poor little vessel, which has no chance whatever against three or four ships of her own class and of, at least, equal speed and fighting weight. Pursuit and interception follow, the six-pounders of the Japanese destroyers converge on the one frail hull, and in ten minutes the Russian ship is sinking. The Jap sailors are endeavouring to save the unfortunate men when, in the dim light, the big Russian cruiser *Bayan* is discerned coming swiftly in this direction, and, as dawn will render her quick-firers fatal to the Japanese destroyers, the latter are compelled to abandon the work of rescue.

After this rather dramatic introduction we may take breath, and endeavour to discover the *raison d'être* of this new enterprise on Admiral Togo's part, and, at the same time, to correlate any further measures he may be taking in what will prove to be a great historical event. In this we are assisted by the despatches of the Special Correspondent of the *Times*, who, with the aid of his despatch-boat, the *Haimun*, and an extremely effective system of wireless telegraphy, renders particularly brilliant service to his paper and the public at this juncture.

It appears that Admiral Togo, having ascertained that the entrance to Port Arthur is still practicable, has evolved the following new scheme for the destruction of the Russian Fleet. The first step is to be the mining of the practicable passage into the harbour, the next the setting of a lure in the shape of a weak squadron outside the port in order to entice the Russians out. Admiral Togo himself, taking advantage of the fogs on the coast, intends to lie off with the main Japanese Fleet, and pounce upon the Russians at sea if they succeed in getting clear of the mines.

We have seen how the first step was accomplished by the *Koryo Maru*, and now, thanks mainly to the *Times* correspondent, who adds many interesting details to Admiral Togo's official report, we are enabled to follow pretty closely the preceding and succeeding course of events.

The Japanese must have left their base on the 11th, as Admiral Togo states that on that day the "combined fleet commenced, as previously planned, the eighth attack upon Port Arthur." The *Koryo Maru* and her attendant torpedo craft reached Port Arthur, as already narrated, at midnight on the 12th, and immediately covering them were two first-class and four second-class cruisers, constituting the Third Fleet, or the Decoying Squadron, of the ensuing narrative. From a map, perhaps the most remarkable of its kind ever published, which was printed in the *Times* of April 21st from materials transmitted by cable from Wei-hai-wei, it is clear that the ships in this squadron were the armoured cruisers *Tokiwa* and *Asama*, and the second-class cruisers *Chitose*, *Takasago*, *Yoshino*, and *Kasagi*.

At 4.30 a.m. on April 13th the *Times* steamer is nearing Port Arthur in dirty, rainy weather, when it comes in view of the remainder of the Japanese combined fleet steering a course similar to that which the *Haimun* is taking.

Here in "line ahead" are the six great battleships of the Japanese Navy, the *Mikasa*, Admiral Togo's flagship, which he has only left for a few minutes during the past two months, leading. Following are the *Asahi*, *Fuji*, *Yashima*, *Hatsuse*, and *Shikishima*, these six splendid vessels forming the First Fleet. In rear comes the Second Fleet, comprising, also in line ahead, six first-class cruisers, the third and fourth being the two new ships, the *Kasuga* and *Nisshin*, which were bought from the Argentine Government, and are now making, it is authoritatively announced, their first public appearance.

Forty miles from Port Arthur the *Times* correspondent sees the *Kasuga* and *Nisshin* suddenly join the battleships, the other four cruisers of the Second Fleet remaining behind, with a destroyer division and a despatch-boat maintaining communication. The six battleships and the two new cruisers now go forward at full steam.

We must now return to the Third

or Decoying Fleet, which appears outside Port Arthur at about 8 a.m. on the 13th, just as the three destroyers of the Second Flotilla has sunk the Russian destroyer *Silni* and evaded the cruiser *Bayan*. The latter vessel, noticing the approach of the Japanese cruisers, now turns her attention to them, and with notable gallantry her commander engages the hostile squadron single-handed.

Naturally, these movements have been duly observed in the harbour, whence Admiral Makaroff now sallies forth with the *Petropavlosk*—which he uses on this occasion as his flagship—the *Pobieda*, *Poltava*—also battleships—and the *Novik*, *Diana*, and *Askold*. These, with the *Bayan*, which has been signalled to return, form up in line, and hurry at full steam against the enemy, at the same time opening a long-range fire.

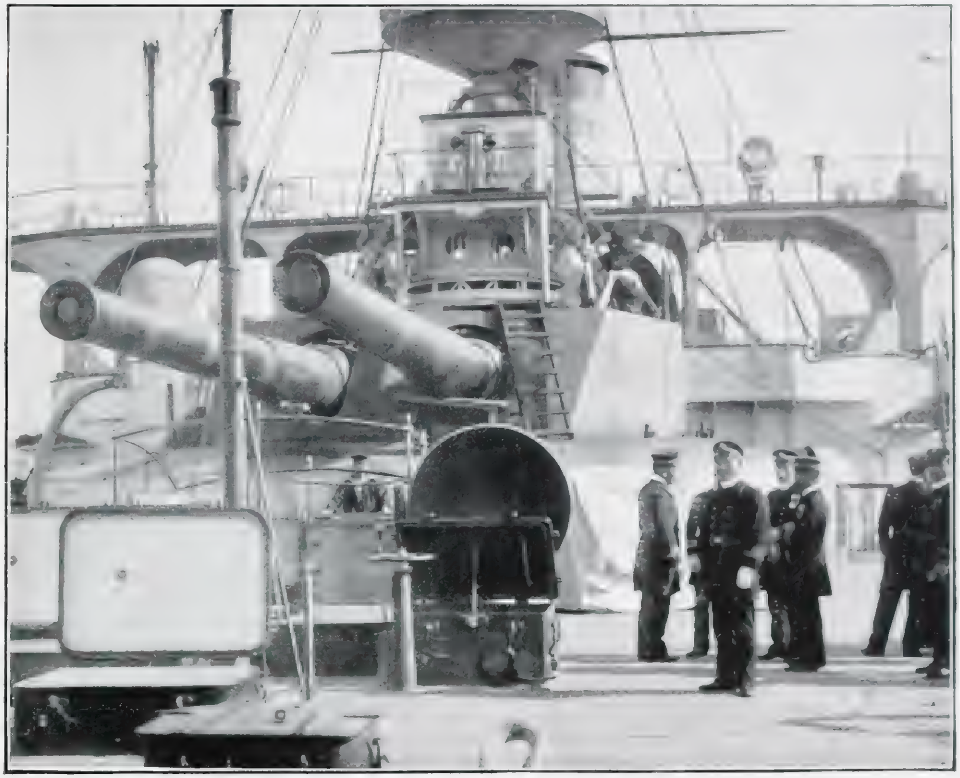


Photo: Symonds, Portsmouth.

THE QUARTER DECK OF THE *Asahi*.

The Third Japanese Fleet, which is commanded by Admiral Dewa, now proceeds to enact to perfection its part of decoy. Tardily answering the Russian fire, and gradually retiring, it entices the enemy some fifteen miles south-east of the port, having meanwhile apprised the First Fleet, by means of wireless telegraphy, of the course of events. Here, it may be said, ends the second chapter of this remarkable episode, and the opportunity may be utilised for a few remarks upon a situation which is not only full of

RUSSIAN NAVAL TYPE.

dramatic possibilities, but also exceedingly instructive and interesting from a variety of standpoints.

Taking the Japanese point of view first, the use of wireless telegraphy in this connection is of engrossing importance, and it would be difficult to imagine a set of circumstances in which the new power thus placed in the hands of naval commanders could be more effectively illustrated. Here we have two squadrons between which ordinary communication has been lost for many hours. Both are at sea, and the distance between them at the time the wireless telegram announcing the pursuit by the Russian Fleet is despatched cannot be less than some thirty-five miles. The weather is dirty, and even from the tallest mainmast in one squadron the keenest eye glued to the finest telescope could not discern the smoke ascending from the other squadron's funnels. Yet the wireless message is as promptly taken up and acted upon as if it had been shouted through a megaphone over a distance of a few score yards. The result might have been the same had the distance been far greater, for, in the cases of the *Times* despatch-boat, messages are recorded as having been successfully despatched over an intervening space of 150 sea miles, and, though equal distances have not yet been covered by wireless telegrams between two vessels at sea, it may be regarded as certain that the Japanese Fleets were working well within the limit of their capacity in this interesting connection.

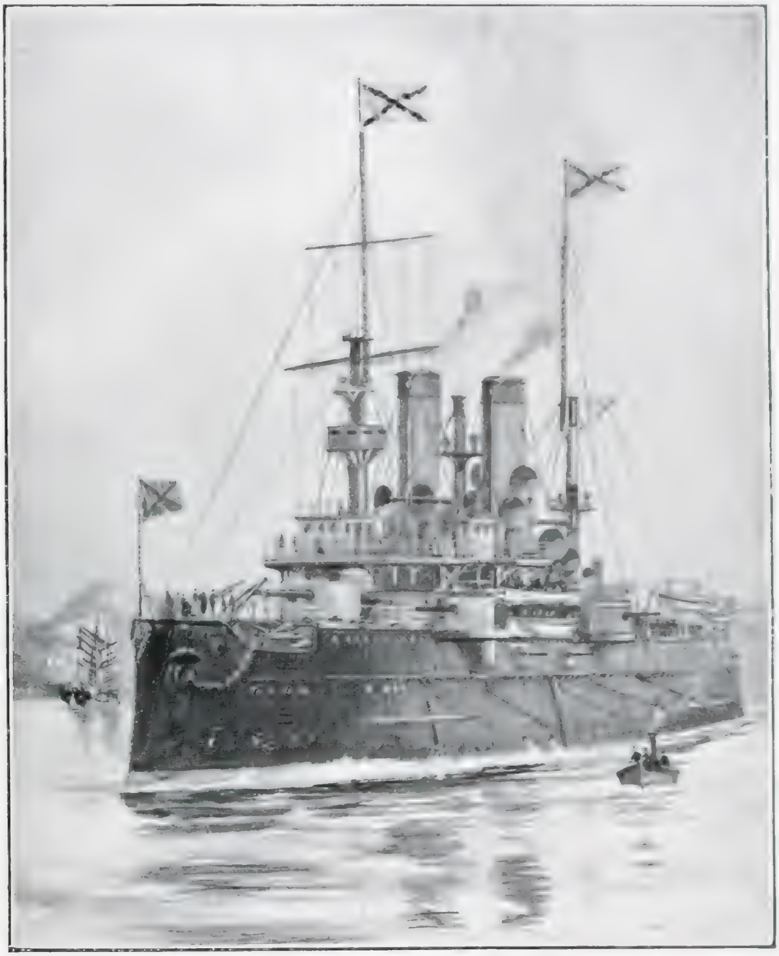
While, in any case, wireless telegraphy is thus shown to be of signal service in naval operations where reinforcements are urgently required, our admiration of Japanese ingenuity is sensibly increased by their brilliant adoption of this up-to-date method of communication in the execution of a most thoughtful and wary manœuvre. The more one looks into this plan of decoying out the Russian Fleet with an inferior force and then summoning a far larger fleet to assist in forcing an engagement on favourable terms—putting aside the subsidiary device of mining what is left of the fairway into the harbour—the more one is struck with the directness and sufficiency which seem to mark all Admiral Togo's tactics, and which of themselves seem to constitute a model method of warfare where such an unstable element as the sea is concerned. For the rest, the operation, from the Japanese standpoint, has been no more complicated or less successful than several which have preceded it, although one may safely imagine that, when

[illegible], St. Petersburg.

RUSSIAN NAVAL TYPE.

that wireless telegram reached the *Mikasa* about nine o'clock on the morning of April 13th, even the cool commander of the Japanese Fleet must have been strangely stirred by the possibilities—only partially to be realised—of the next few hours.

Let us now join the Russian Fleet as it steams its best after Admiral Dewa's retreating ships. The gallant Makaroff may well be proud of the show which his squadron makes, in spite of previous vicissitudes, this murky April morning. The largest vessel in it is the *Pobieda*, of nearly 13,000 tons, a nominal speed of 19 knots, and having a weight of broadside fire of over 2,500 lb. But the *Petropavlosk* and *Poltava*, which are sister ships, are also powerful vessels of some 11,000 tons, a nominal speed of 17 knots, and a weight of broadside fire some 800 lb. heavier than that of the *Pobieda*.



THE *PETROPAVLOSK.*

The *Bayan*, too, is a fine armoured cruiser of nearly 8,000 tons, a nominal speed of nearly 22 knots, and, for a fast cruiser, a powerful armament.

In view of subsequent happenings it is interesting to note that the *Pobieda* is well-known in this country, for she was one of the foreign warships which came to Spithead in 1902 to do honour to King Edward on the date originally fixed for the Coronation. She visited Portland, too, in December, 1902, when outward bound to the Far East.

Still greater interest is attached to the *Petropavlosk*, named after the harbour in the White Sea which the Allies attacked unsuccessfully in the war of 1854-5. She is described as in some respects a small copy of our *Royal Sovereign* class —a very expensive copy, too, for, with her guns and her engines, which were of British manufacture, she cost over a million sterling.

Admiral Makaroff, who has a fancy for changing his flagship, is, as has been stated, on board the *Petropavlosk*, which is commanded by Captain Yakovlev, and has a complement of about 700 all told. The Grand Duke Cyril, the son of the Grand Duke Vladimir, is present on the ship, which has on board a distinguished non-combatant in the person of Vassili Verestchagin, the well-known war painter. This famous artist, at the age of sixty-two, has come to the Far East to get material for future pictures, and only arrived at Port Arthur a day or two ago. He has asked to be shown a sea-fight, and is on board the *Petropavlosk* by direct invitation of Admiral Makaroff.

The gallant Admiral himself has reason to be in good spirits. Only last evening he is said to have telegraphed to his Imperial Master that he hoped almost immediately to fight a decisive action with the enemy's fleet, and a chance has arisen, with almost startling suddenness, of realising this anticipation. Possibly emboldened by their previous successes, the Japanese have this time sent but a weak cruiser squadron against Port Arthur, and, if only he can come up with it, he may be able, with the considerable force at his disposal, severely to punish, if not to annihilate these rash intruders.

It is quite likely that such an experienced and sagacious sailor as Makaroff has some misgivings as to the appearance of the Japanese Navy in such small force on this occasion. He knows what manner of man Admiral Togo is, and, since he came to Port Arthur, he has received more than one reminder of Japanese craftiness. Yet there is something quite natural about the behaviour of this cruiser squadron, which may well have lost touch with the main fleet by faulty timing, or through a score of accidents which may occur in dirty weather. Hope runs high, but none the less vigilant watch is kept on the horizon for any speck or sign that may indicate the presence within dangerous proximity of a superior enemy.

Suddenly the wind freshens, and the mist which hangs over the sea is partially dispelled. Sharp eyes descry what is clearly smoke, for which the chase is not responsible, and the ruse is guessed. A signal is run up on the *Petropavlosk*, and the Russian Fleet, till now in pursuit, puts about and makes for Port Arthur at full steam.

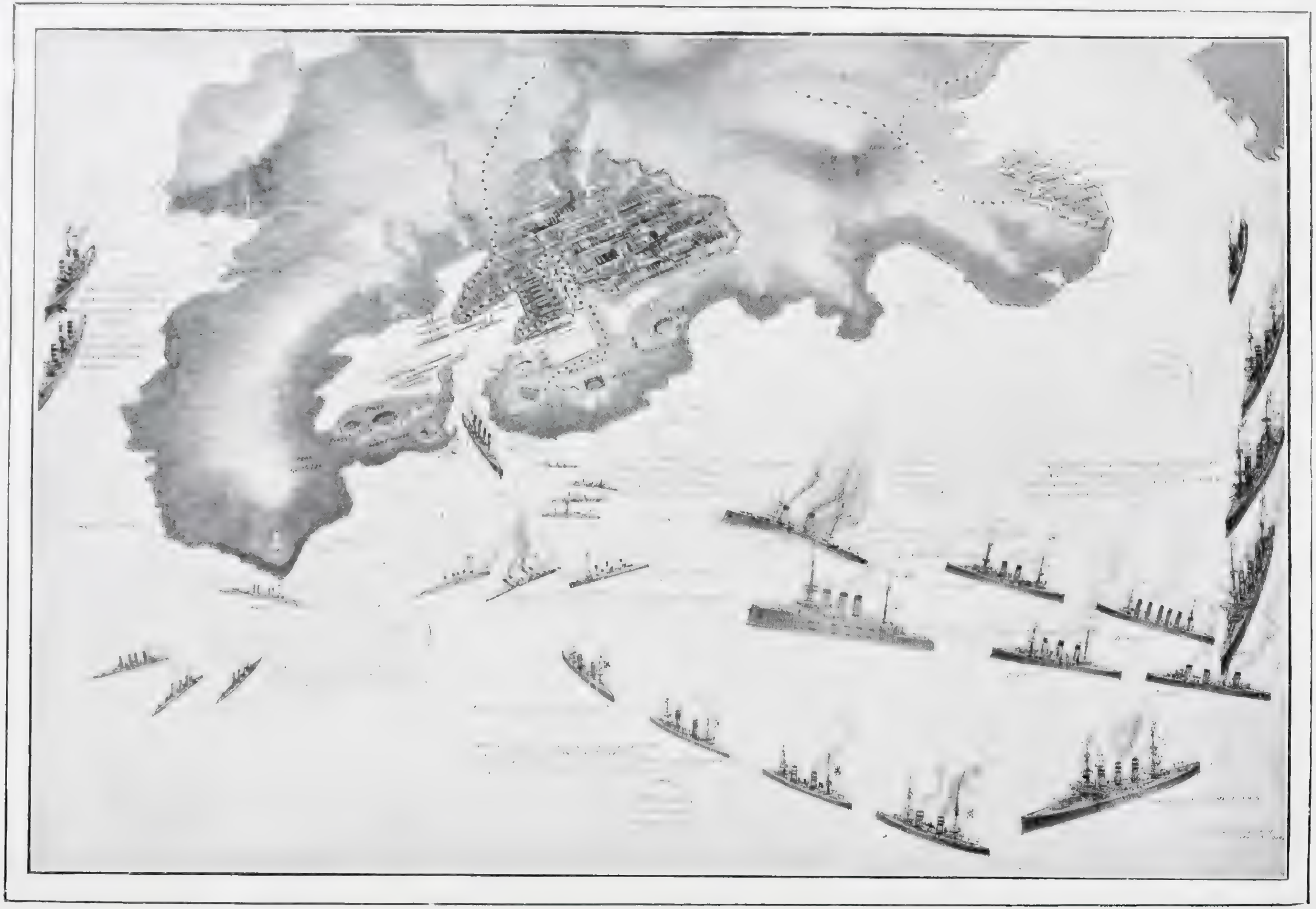
In chase at their utmost speed come the six battleships of Admiral Togo's squadron, together with the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, which, as we have seen from the narrative of an eye-witness, must have been signalled to join the battleships as soon as the Admiral received his wireless message from the Third Fleet. For a short time the reinforcing squadron may have remained wholly shrouded by the mist, but the dispersal of the latter at a critical moment is a cruel blow to Admiral Togo's hopes. The chance of overtaking the flying Russian Fleet is slender, but the effort is made, and a glorious spectacle it must have afforded. On the Russian side the *Petropavlosk* still leads, the *Bayan* and *Novik* bringing up the rear. The Japanese apparently pursue in two lines, the leading one composed of the five battleships *Mikasa*, *Asahi*, *Fuji*, *Yashima*, and *Hatsuse*, with the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* a little to the right, or, to speak nautically, on their starboard beam. On the port quarter — in other words, to the rear and a little to the left—of the *Hatsuse* comes the battleship *Shikishima* leading the second line, which is composed of the four second-class cruisers of the Decoying Squadron. The *Asama* and the *Tokiwa*, are detached from the main force and take post considerably to the left, possibly for purposes of observation or to guard against a flank attack by torpedo craft. The battleships have hoisted their fighting flags, and are bowling along at 18 knots, a speed at which they must have overtaken the Russian squadron had the chase been a slightly longer one. But the fortune of war is in this respect unfavourable to Admiral Togo. The Russian ships have not been enticed out quite far enough, and the unlucky lifting of the mist has just given Admiral Makaroff time to win back to the shelter of the forts.

M. VASSILI VERESTCHAGIN.

It is nearing half-past ten, when it becomes evident that the chase is over. The Russian ships are rapidly coming under the guns of the Golden Hill forts, and their pursuers are preparing to abandon the attempt to overtake them.

As shown in the *Times* map alluded to above, the Russian squadron is about to form single line, the battleships leading, for the purpose of entering the harbour. The *Petropavlosk* is within little more than a mile of the harbour entrance, and most of the ship's officers have gone down to breakfast. According to one account Admiral Makaroff himself is in his cabin, but another version speaks of him as being on the bridge with Captain Yakovlev, the Grand Duke Cyril, and the latter's aide-de-camp, Lieutenant von Kuke. Two officers of the watch are examining the harbour entrance preparatory to taking the flagship in at the head of the squadron. The *Petropavlosk* is covered with signal flags, the last signal made being for the torpedo-boats to enter the harbour.

Suddenly a fearful explosion takes place, followed by another. The *Petropavlosk* has run on one of the *Koryo Maru's* mines! Huge gaps are torn in the great warship's hull, the water rushes



PLAN INDICATING ADMIRAL TOGO'S STRATEGY WHICH DECOYED ADMIRAL MAKAROFF OVER THE JAPANESE FIELD OF MINES.

in, flames burst out on all sides, the vessel lists heavily, and, in an incredibly short time—two minutes, it is said—the flagship sinks with Admiral Makaroff and 700 souls aboard!

Here is the actual sinking described by an eye-witness who was watching the return of the Russian squadron from Golden Hill—

"Suddenly, in the forefront of the right side of the *Petropavlosk* a white column arises, a double, dull report is heard, and the entire vessel is swathed in curling clouds of orange-brown smoke. 'Broadside!' somebody exclaims. Through a field-glass one can discern the fall of many objects from aloft, the topmast shattered, and tongues of fire everywhere. 'She's sinking,' they tearfully cry around me. The *Petropavlosk* begins to settle down slowly, bow foremost, turning over on her right side. Now the bow is no longer visible, and the foremast is slowly descending, the roundhouse is still seen, and the chimneys are ful of water. Now they, too, have vanished, just as if they had dropped clean off.

GRAND DUKE CYRIL.

"The other mast is now sinking. There is the turret, with the guns, going slowly beneath the surface, and there is the stern disappearing. Now the left screw is seen still slowly revolving, and human figures are discernible slipping down the side of the ship. All this soon gives place to tongues of fire; suddenly there is a last flare, and all is over. The *Petropavlosk* is no more!"

No effort of imagination is needed to picture the awful surroundings of this tragic catastrophe on the ship itself. Image after image of appalling dreadfulness forms in the mind's eye as one thinks of those tremendous two minutes and all that was packed into them. For most of those below swift and merciful suffocation must have brought about the end almost instantaneously, and one is thankful to be spared the painful thought of the gallant Makaroff battling for a period of protracted agony with certain death. But where a mine explosion is followed, as doubtless happened in this case, by the bursting of boilers and the blowing up of a well-stored magazine, there cannot but be many individual cases of terrible suffering. It is said that not a single man who was between decks at the time the explosion occurred succeeded in escaping. "The men on deck were thrown in all directions, those who fell into the water swimming and grasping the wreckage, which gradually rose to the surface from the vortex caused by the sinking ship. The remainder of the squadron stopped and lowered their boats, while the torpedo-boats sped as quickly as possible to the rescue of the survivors." The Japanese would willingly have assisted in this humane task, and subsequently expressed their profound regret that they were prevented from doing so by the strong southerly wind which would have rendered it impossible for their boats to rejoin the squadron. About thirty only were saved, including the Grand Duke Cyril, who had an almost miraculous escape. The force of the explosion was such that Captain Yakovlev, who was thrown against a stanchion, was killed, but the Grand Duke Cyril, who was also hurled across the bridge, was only partially stunned, and being a fine swimmer he managed, after clearing the ship, to keep himself afloat until picked up. The painter Verestchagin was on deck when the explosion occurred, but it is surmised that, owing to his advanced age, he was powerless to save himself from the tremendous suction of the sinking vessel.

It is not surprising that this fearful catastrophe should have thrown the whole Russian line into confusion. The *Times* correspondent says that the vessels could be seen firing indiscriminately into the water in their immediate front, in the hope of destroying other hidden engines of destruction. This precaution notwithstanding, the battleship *Pobicda* runs on to a mine and is badly damaged, but manages nevertheless to crawl into the harbour with a large hole blown in her bow on the water-line, and three compartments filled with water.

Eventually the remainder of the Russian squadron, covered by the fire of the Golden Hill batteries, and favoured by the mist which still hangs about the harbour approaches, gains the inside of Port Arthur by noon. Shortly afterwards Admiral Togo withdraws his whole force, which retires in different directions, and, concentrating in the evening, anchors at sea within striking distance of Port Arthur. The wind has freshened into a gale, and night falls drearily and heavily on a day long to be sadly remembered as including one of the most grim and tragic episodes in the naval annals of the world.

It is difficult to describe the effect of this terrible catastrophe both on Russia and on the civilised world in general. The news of the disaster reached St. Petersburg on the morning of April 13th, but was withheld from the public until late in the evening. Owing to the Easter holidays the populace were in a merry-making mood, the Easter joybells were ringing cheerful peals, and there was no suspicion that anything untoward had happened. Towards evening the thronging of carriages before the palace of the Grand Duke Vladimir attracted attention, and the rumour began to spread that some calamity had occurred. Between eight and nine o'clock a brief official report was published, in which it was admitted that, apparently, Admiral Makaroff had perished, but no estimate was given of the number of lives lost. Even this attenuated account produced a feeling of stupefaction, and, as eye-witnesses remarked, it was painfully interesting to watch the holiday crowds issuing from the brilliantly-lighted booths, dancing saloons, and popular theatres, buying copies of the Government report, and then falling into gloomy little groups to discuss the disaster, the dimensions of which few were able at first to comprehend.

The Tsar himself was profoundly

affected by the sad intelligence, shedding copious tears when the details were communicated to him, and displaying the keenest solicitude for the bereaved Madame Makaroff, to whom an officer was sent in a special train with kind messages of Imperial condolence. The great Autocrat of all the Russias then commanded that the melancholy news should be given to the whole world, as he put it, and proceeded to arrange for a requiem service. In a despatch from St. Petersburg, sent on the evening of the 14th, the Special Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* gives a brief but vivid description of the impressive scene during the solemn ceremony in the spacious church of the Admiralty, near the banks of the Neva: "Within that vast temple the Marine Minister, the heads of the Staff, admirals and captains, the whole Diplomatic Corps, and the bowed figure of Madame Makaroff are gathered together amid lugubrious surroundings to offer the last tribute of respect to the heroic dead who perished thousands of miles away. Grey-bearded priests, garbed in black and silver, moving among the flickering wax tapers and dense clouds of incense, the melancholy chant of subdued lamentations, and the impressive words of the touching funeral service attune the hearts of all to sentiments of sympathy and sorrow. For Russia has been stricken, and as yet the bulk of the nation has not realised how terribly."

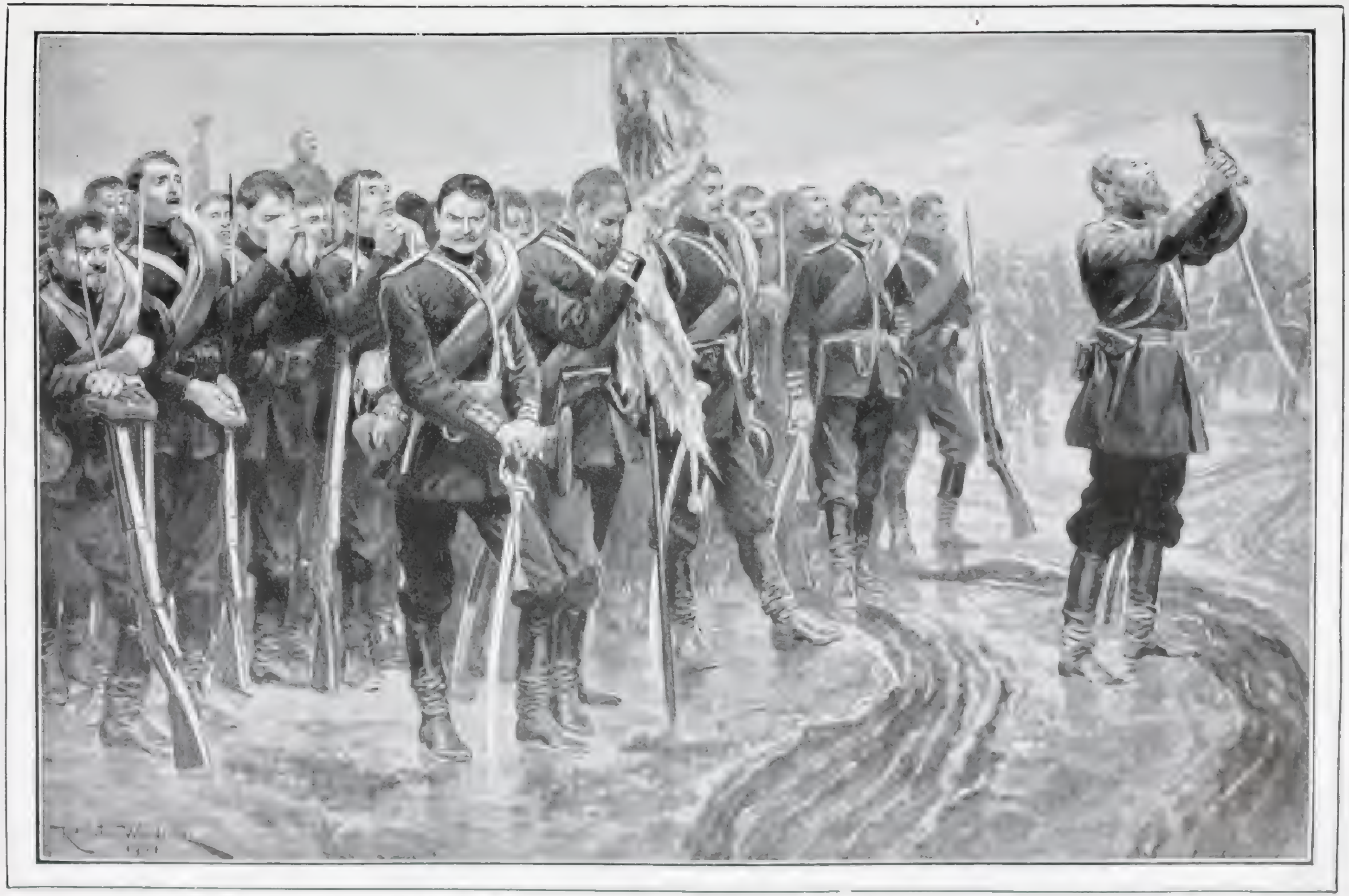
Throughout the Western world the news of the untimely death of the gallant Makaroff aroused feelings of the deepest regret, coupled with a singular volume of personal reminiscence tending to show how widely and thoroughly the late commander was both loved and esteemed. Seldom, indeed, has a soldier or a sailor of modern times passed to his rest amid a more universal chorus of respect and liking. While he could hardly be classed with naval leaders of the very first rank, it was recalled that his record was a very fine one, especially as regards eminence in the scientific branches of the naval profession. He had commanded both the Mediterranean and the Baltic squadrons, but to the world at large was better known, perhaps, as the author of several thoughtful works on naval tactics and construction, and as the designer of the "ice-breaker" *Yermak.*

It was in connection with the building of that remarkable vessel by the great Elswick firm on the banks of the Tyne that Admiral Makaroff became widely known to Englishmen, with whom he was a general favourite. His breezy heartiness of manner was, indeed, more characteristic of the English than of the Russian naval officer, and his hardihood and devotion to sport caused Alexander II. to refer to him, when quite a junior officer, as "my Englishman." A whole-souled, large-hearted man, he was adored by his brother officers, and when, in March, he left Nikolaieff railway station for the Far East, his tunic was found to have been completely stripped of its buttons by comrades who, in Russian fashion, had taken this means of capturing a parting souvenir. To the poor of St. Petersburg he was a generous friend, more lavish than his means justified in the distribution of largesse in the shape of small coins which he was wont to carry about in a special pocket for the purpose, a pocket which Madame Makaroff one day, with thrifty prudence, took pains to sew up. By the Russian sailors he was regarded with genuine reverence, and we have already seen how the Russian soldiery regarded him as the reincarnation of the dead Skobeleff, under whom, by the way, Makaroff fought at Geok Tepé in the Turkoman campaign.

It is an interesting circumstance that Admiral Makaroff's death was genuinely deplored in Japan, where the satisfaction created by the very substantial success surrounding Admiral Togo's latest effort was restrained in a very marked degree, as far as public rejoicing was concerned, by the loss of such a gallant and distinguished adversary. At Nagoya, on the night of April 15th, this chivalrous sentiment found becoming outlet in a great and solemn procession, a thousand white lanterns for the souls of those drowned in the sinking of the *Petropavlosk* being carried by the crowd, while banners were held aloft bearing the inscription, "We sorrow unquenchably for the brave Russian Admiral Makaroff."

ADMIRAL TOGO

Let us now return for a brief space to Port Arthur, where, on the night of April 13th, we left the Russian Fleet



BEFORE THE BATTLE: A RUSSIAN PRAYER FOR SUCCESS.

sadly diminished, but otherwise secure in harbour, and Admiral Togo's three squadrons anchored at sea some distance from the fort.

On April 14th Admiral Togo resumed operations, three destroyer flotillas and a flotilla of torpedo-boats being sent forward at 3 a.m., followed three hours later by the "Third Fleet," which had acted as decoys on the previous morning. The Russian ships were not seen outside the fort. All efforts to draw them out proved unavailing, and even the forts declined to open fire.

On the morning of the 15th, Admiral Togo again brought his battle Fleet up to the fort, with the intention of making an effective demonstration. On arrival, three of the Russian mines were discovered and destroyed. At 10 a.m. the battleships took up a position opposite the roadstead, whence they could shell the Golden Hill and other batteries, while the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* were detached and sent round to Pigeon Bay, in order to bombard a new fort on the west of the Liau-ti-shan Peninsula, and also to try anew the effect of high-angle fire on the inner harbour. The two new cruisers acquitted themselves admirably, silencing the new fort, and showing their armament to be in every way satisfactory. The bombardment, which continued intermittently until about one o'clock, was replied to by both the Russian ships and forts, but no damage was admitted by the Japanese.

"Thus ended," writes the *Times* Correspondent, "the three days' engagement which, in the opinion of most, has destroyed any faint hope which may have existed that the Russians might be able to equalise again the balance of naval power in these seas."

On the gravity of the misfortune to Russia there is no need to expatiate. But there is no question that this new disaster has considerably altered the complexion of affairs, has sadly damped Russia's expectations of any but military successes, and in many circles caused even the frank proposal to abandon Port Arthur to be regarded with very much greater tolerance than would have been accorded to the bare suggestion of such a possibility a few days back.

The Russian Government, however, maintains a bold front. Admiral Alexeieff himself proceeds to Port Arthur, and hoists his flag on the battleship *Sevastopol*, in supersession of Rear-Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, who had taken over command of the squadron on Admiral Makaroff's death. Meanwhile, a successor to Makaroff has been substantively appointed in the person of Admiral Skrydloff, who was recently selected to lead the fleet which it is proposed to send from the Baltic to the Far East in August. Admiral Skrydloff is a bold and dashing officer, who is regarded in Russia as standing next to the late Admiral Makaroff in professional capacity. Like his predecessor, he has commanded the Russian Mediterranean Squadron, also the Black Sea Fleet, and he represented the Russian Navy at the Spithead Review, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Tall, bearded, and of commanding appearance, he is distinguished for brilliant gallantry in action. But it is understood that he does not intend to emulate Makaroff's daring tactics in the matter of sorties. He tells a French Correspondent who interviews him that his first care will be for the preservation of his ships, which he intends to keep jealously for a great occasion. "Between ourselves," he adds, "I shall put as my address on my visiting cards 'Port Arthur and Vladivostok,' as I shall see my two squadrons, united or otherwise. I shall go about, in case of need, between Port Arthur and Vladivostok."

It is, perhaps, somewhat unfortunate that Admiral Skrydloff does not make any particular haste to take up his new command, but expends at least a valuable week in paying farewell visits, and receiving the presents in the shape of "ikons," or sacred pictures, and other offerings which are always showered on popular Russian commanders on their departure for the front. This fact is recalled with some bitterness in official circles at St. Petersburg three weeks later, when events at Port Arthur have culminated in a situation of still greater gravity for Russia than was indicated by the sinking of the *Petropavlosk*.

For we are nearing a really critical period of the War, and one in which the extraordinary folly of the Russians in trusting too implicitly to national and personal prestige will be exhibited in a still clearer light than hitherto. Admiral Skrydloff has talked very impressively about the good care he means to take of his ships, and of his intention to hie to and fro between Port Arthur as occasion may require. The "irony of fate" is seldom seen to more painful perfection than in connection with some of the larger incidents and accidents of war, and very possibly this is a reflection which occurs somewhat sadly, a little later, to Admiral Makaroff's rather self-assertive successor. With Admiral Togo continuing his daring efforts to block the only narrow exit from Port Arthur, with the Japanese Army only biding its time to isolate the fortress completely, Admiral Skrydloff may find his declared tactics strangely difficult to put into practice.

Photo: Renard, Kiel

THE [illegible]

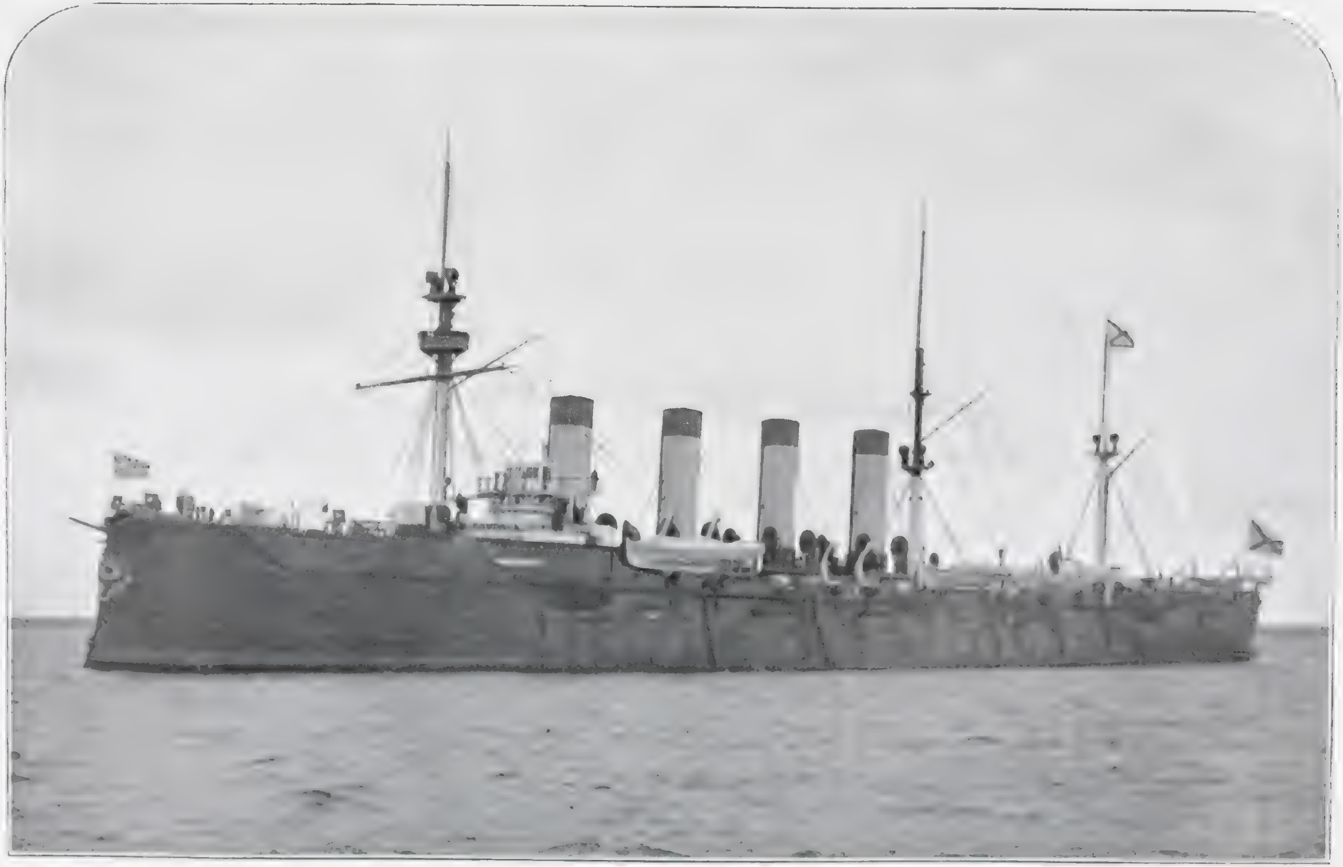
CHAPTER XVI.

AT VLADIVOSTOK—THE MYSTERIOUS SQUADRON—A DESCENT ON GENSAN—THE SINKING OF THE *KINSHIU MARU*—NO SURRENDER—FANATICAL HEROISM.

As narrated in Chapter VIII., a detached squadron of the Japanese Fleet bombarded Vladivostok on March 8th, subsequently searching the bays in the vicinity of that frozen harbour in the hope of discovering some trace of the Russian Vladivostok squadron. The latter was known to consist of four powerful cruisers, the *Rossia*, *Gromoboi*, *Rurik*, and *Bogatyr*, which, in the first week of the War, had sallied out and, after a brief cruise, in the course of which only a Japanese merchantman was sunk, had returned to Vladivostok. The uncertainty surrounding the subsequent movements of these four ships had caused the Japanese a good deal of trouble. The sudden appearance of four such heavily armed vessels at an inconvenient juncture might upset the best laid Japanese plans, more especially for the landing of troops; and as long as such a daring commander as the late Admiral Makaroff directed Russian naval operations in the Far East, it was impossible to foretell what use he might make of this squadron. As we have seen, the bombardment of Vladivostok failed to draw any response either from the forts or from the inner harbour, and the subsequent reconnaissance of the bays did not reveal any signs of the Russian ships. Accordingly, for the rest of March and part of April the whereabouts of the Vladivostok squadron remained a mystery and, as such, a source of many and curious speculations.

By the light of subsequent events it is clear that these four big Russian vessels had not been engaged in any of the adventurous enterprises attributed to them, but had been quietly resting at anchor in the grand harbour at Vladivostok, which is sufficiently large and well screened to enable even a fair-sized squadron to escape observation from outside. During the bombardment, it is said, two of the cruisers were in dock, the other two lying in the northern portion of the Golden Horn, where they could not possibly be seen by the Japanese. Possibly if the whole squadron had been in fighting trim, some more active part might have been taken by it. But the ice in the harbour was thick, and, in any case, the bombarding squadron was of sufficient size and strength to render an attempt to try conclusions with it at sea a very risky experiment.

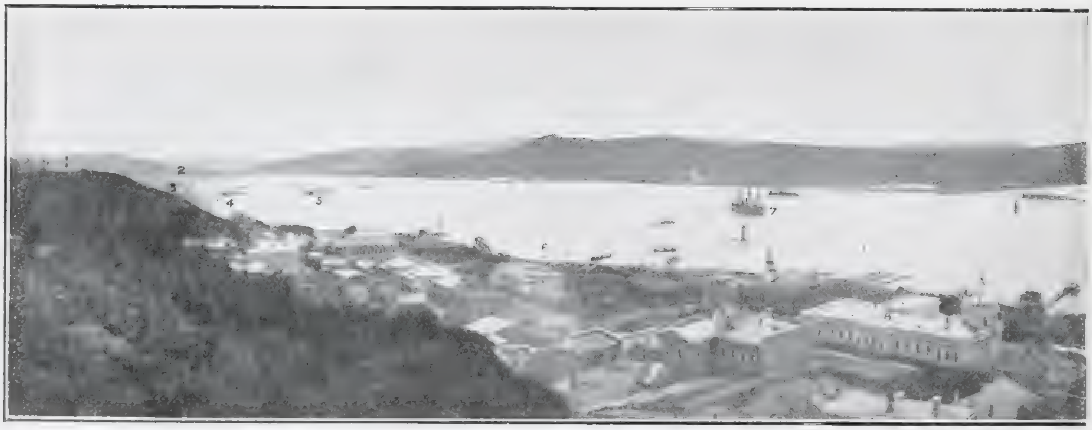
The Japanese appear to have made several efforts during March to ascertain the position of the Vladivostok squadron, and it is probable that, until a still later date, this part of the theatre of war was watched as carefully as circumstances would permit. But the Japanese Fleet was much occupied in other directions. Port Arthur was not yet "bottled up," the landings on the north-east coast of Korea had to be protected, and there were other land operations in prospect, in connection with which naval assistance might be required. Moreover, there is a double approach to the harbour at Vladivostok which renders it exceedingly difficult to scrutinise at all closely the comings and goings of ships using this northern base. Further bombardment



THE ROSSIA.

would have been futile, and so, after the first week in March, Vladivostok enjoyed for a space complete immunity from the alarms which made Port Arthur such a lively place of residence, while the presence of the squadron gave it an air of security and importance which was doubtless much appreciated by what remained of the civil population.

It would seem that, in spite of the intimation issued at the commencement of the War by the Commandant, General Vorognetz, that civilians were to leave the place, there are still, at the beginning of April, about 5,000 people in Vladivostok, besides the naval and military element. The authorities have been making strenuous efforts to provide against future isolation, and the Commissariat Department has even been looking ahead to the extent of purchasing in advance large quantities of grain, to be delivered after the harvest for use next winter. But, these displays of prudence notwithstanding, there is considerable present privation. There is much interruption to communications, owing to the flooded state of the rivers, and supplies from the surrounding country only trickle in at intervals and in small quantities. The Bank having removed to Khabarovsk, there is also a scarcity of money, and altogether the conditions of existence in the "Sovereign City of the East" appear to be anything but hilarious. Still it is an interesting circumstance that here, as in so many historical cases where towns have been threatened with siege and famine, human nature asserts itself not unpleasantly, and spirited efforts are made to keep disagreeable possibilities in the background. Many owners of private houses have placed them at the disposal of the authorities for use as hospitals, and entertainments are constantly given on behalf of the sick and wounded. But the latter are not numerous, and, according to all accounts, the prevailing spirit is one of cheery good feeling heightened by individual acts of beneficence. With special gratification it is recorded that the only monastery in the district comes to the relief of the



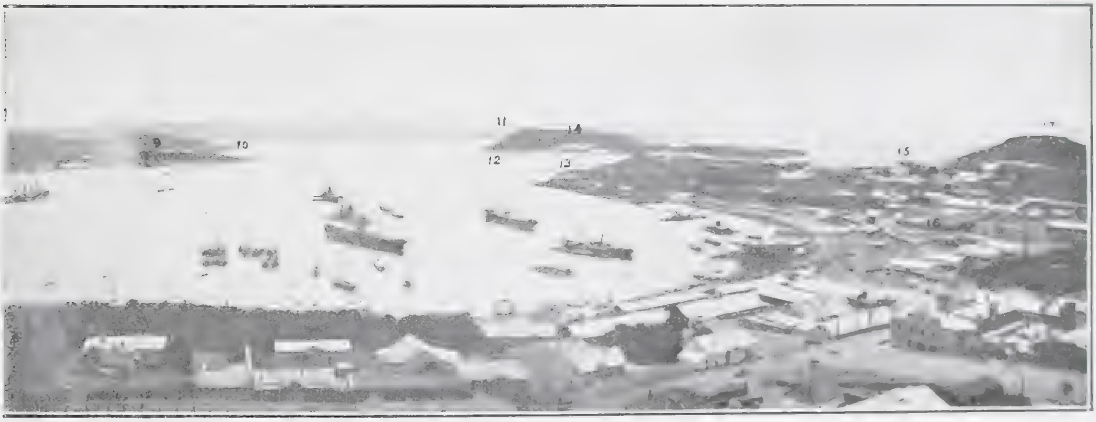
PANORAMIC VIEW OF

1. Residential quarter behind cliff. 2. Barracks. 3. Arsenal and dockyard. 4. Cathedral. 5. Floating dock. 6. Naval club. 7. Anchorage for Russian man-of-war. 8. Admiralty buildings.

troops with several carloads of provisions, from which detail it may be conjectured that the Commissariat is indeed in rather a parlous state.

Exactly what is taking place in the way of military movement at this period in the district of which Vladivostok is the centre is a little hard to discover, and it is very possible that, in the large operations of the War, this interesting point may continue to remain somewhat obscure. But it is evident that the Russians have not thought it necessary to keep a large garrison boxed up in complete idleness at Vladivostok without doing something towards averting a possible Japanese descent upon some point of the coastline farther south. In particular they have thrown up strong entrenchments at Possiet Bay, and have established telegraphic communications between that place and Vladivostok. They have also mined the entrance to Pallas Bay in anticipation of an attempt on the part of the enemy to land troops hereabouts preparatory to an advance on Harbin. From Vladivostok to the mouth of the Tumen River, where North-Eastern Korea begins, is Russian territory, and there are in this district a number of villages peopled by Cossacks, whom for years past Russia has been helping to emigrate to the Far East with an eye, perhaps, to military as well as agricultural possibilities. The able-bodied men among these villagers have been mobilised, and are a considerable source of strength to Russia at this juncture, not only because they are Cossacks, but by reason of their complete acclimatisation and local experience.

It is expedient to dwell upon details like this, because they may help to explain why the Japanese have not, before this, attempted either to isolate Vladivostok, or even to threaten Harbin itself. We can now see, too, with added clearness, why, when the Japanese occupied Korea, they did not content themselves with merely getting a strong grip on the north-western corner. If they had neglected to land at Gensan, or, as it is sometimes called, Wonsan, on the east coast, subsequently coupling up their position there with that to the south of



VLADIVOSTOK. PORT AND TOWN.

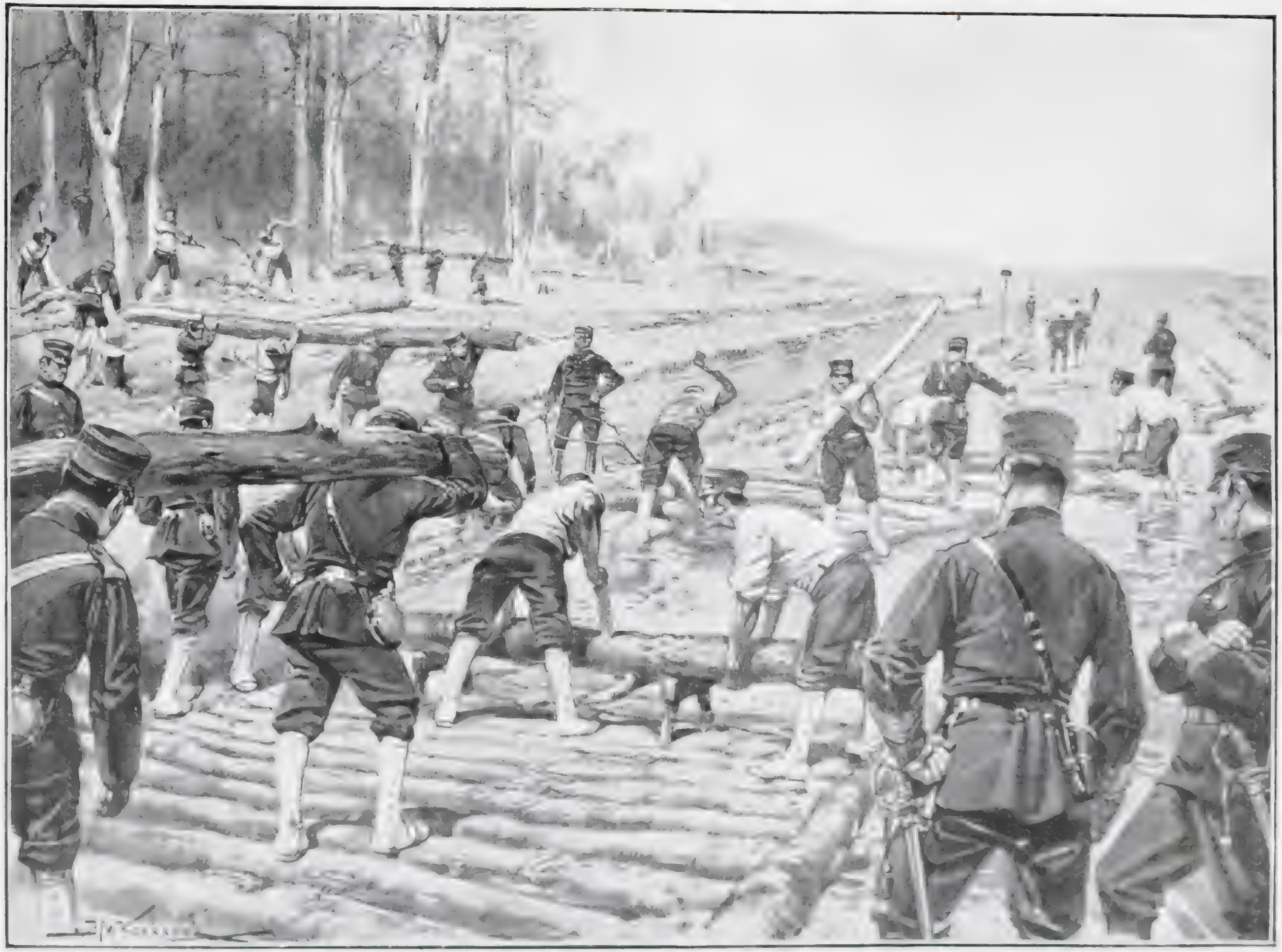
9. Artillery depôt. 10. Eastern Bosphorus Strait (the one entrance to the harbour). 11. [illegible] 12. Powder magazine. 13. Wharf and shell magazine. 14. Battery behind hill. 15. Officers' quarters. 16. Terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railway. 17. Mount Semenoff, signalling station, fort and battery.

the Yalu, they would simply have invited a dangerous Cossack raid from the Vladivostok district. A raid into Eastern Korea did indeed take place, but the Japanese were able to disregard it, as they never could have done if they had not, partially at any rate, blocked this possible line of Russian advance. In a word, there is reason to believe that, just as the "mystery" of the Vladivostok squadron was an important feature of the naval situation for a good many weeks in the first stage of the War, so the military possibilities connected with Vladivostok and the country between it and the Tumen River were of much greater account from both the Russian and Japanese standpoints than might be supposed from the recorded course of events.

After this necessary, if somewhat lengthy, preface, we come to the commencement of the fourth week in April, when the ice in the Golden Horn has broken up, and there is a chance for the Vladivostok squadron not only to get to sea—which it can do at the worst of times with the help of an ice-breaker—but also, if necessary, to return hurriedly to the shelter of the harbour forts. Indeed, it is time for the squadron to justify its existence. As we have seen in Chapter XV., things at Port Arthur have been going from bad to worse. The gallant Makaroff, after galvanising his command into what in the circumstances was astonishing activity, has perished in the sunk *Petropavlosk*, and as yet Admiral Skrydloff has not had time to replace him. There have been fresh alarms, and isolation of the southern stronghold must be imminent. Surely there is work which four strong ships like the *Rossia*, *Gromoboi*, *Rurik*, and *Bogatyr* can do, if not to intimidate the enemy, at least to give him to understand that Russia has still a fleet, if only a small one, "in being" in Far Eastern waters. The squadron, it should now be understood, is under a fresh commander. Baron Shtakelberg has returned to St. Petersburg, and Captain Reitzenstein, who was acting as Commodore when the squadron sunk the hapless *Nakanoura Maru* on February 11th, has been superseded by Rear-Admiral Jessen.

At daybreak on April 23rd the squadron, accompanied by torpedo craft, leaves Vladivostok and puts to sea. On the following day the *Rurik* returns to harbour, while the three remaining ships proceed boldly to Gensan. They arrive off this place on the morning of the 25th, and heave to about five miles from the entrance to the bay.

The sudden apparition of the enemy at Gensan must have caused considerable surprise and some little consternation. The civilian inhabitants are said to have stampeded at once, and the garrison may well have been somewhat disconcerted, as it only consisted at the time of some 800 men, with a few guns which would have been of little use against the Russian warships' armaments. A bombardment was naturally expected, with possibly a landing to follow. But the Vladivostok squadron has no such rash and wasteful proceedings in view. Ammunition is hardly too plentiful at Vladivostok, and operations on land are best left to the growing military forces under General Kuropatkin. But it must be admitted that the actual performance of the Vladivostok squadron on this occasion, if marked by commendable prudence, is hardly inspiring as regards conception or results. Nor is it such as to cause the little Jap garrison of Gensan any serious uneasiness.



JAPANESE ENGINEERS CONSTRUCTING A TIMBER ROAD FOR TROOPS

What happens may be told in a few words. Two destroyers are despatched by Admiral Jessen into the bay, and these, as they run in towards the shore, descry at anchor a little Japanese trading steamer of about 500 tons, called the *Goyo Maru*. The destroyers hail the crew of this humble craft and order them to betake themselves to shore forthwith. The commander of one of the destroyers now boards the *Goyo Maru* and takes possession of her papers and flag—these trivial details are chronicled in the Russian despatches as if they were great exploits—and the poor little merchantman is then sent to the bottom by a torpedo. This operation, which has lasted about four hours, being concluded, the two destroyers steam proudly out of the bay and rejoin the three cruisers. Later in the day the squadron steams northward in the direction of Vladivostok.

At this point a very interesting circumstance has to be taken into account, which shows how many and various are the chances of naval warfare. There could have been few things more ardently desired at this time by the Japanese than that a sufficient portion of their Fleet should encounter the Vladivostok squadron on the high seas and, if possible, remove once for all this standing menace to both the naval and military Japanese plans of campaign. Conversely, perhaps, the last thing in the world which the Russians wanted was to endanger the most active portion of their remaining Navy in the Far East by bringing it into sudden contact with any but a greatly inferior force of the enemy's ships. Yet no sooner does the Vladivostok squadron put to sea, and recommence to win a glorious reputation by sinking unarmed merchantmen, than by the merest chance it escapes falling in with a strong Japanese Fleet which at this very moment is seeking to carry out a fresh attack on Vladivostok. While Admiral Jessen is coming southwards, Admiral Kamimura is going north, and, while the two Russian destroyers are blowing up the hapless *Goyo Maru*, the Japanese squadron might have been pounding Vladivostok had its movements not have been hampered by an impenetrable fog. Finding it impossible to effect his purpose Admiral Kamimura steamed southwards, and must again have passed within a short distance of Admiral Jessen's ships, the fogs which constantly shroud these waters making it impossible for either squadron to catch sight of the other. It is said that, while near Gensan, Admiral Jessen intercepted a wireless telegram which, although indecipherable, warned him that the Japanese Fleet was in the neighbourhood. It is possible that this may have accounted for his rather rapid and undignified withdrawal from Gensan, but the point is unimportant. The serious reflection is that only an accident of the weather prevented what might have been a really important naval action at sea, one which could not but have had a very practical bearing upon the whole course of the War.

Let us now return to the Vladivostok squadron, which has evidently been fired by its recent success to seek fresh triumphs. About six o'clock on the evening of the 25th it sights another small Japanese trading steamer, which is stated to have had on board war stores. The crew of fifteen Koreans and twelve Japanese having been placed in safety, a new laurel is added to the wreath of Russia's naval triumphs by the sinking of this fresh victim "by means of a pyroxyline cartridge fired from the *Gromoboi*."

A few hours later a real slice of luck falls in Admiral Jessen's way. Early in the morning of the 25th, a few hours before the arrival of the Vladivostok cruisers, a Japanese transport, the *Kinshiu Maru*, had left Gensan, having on board a detachment of the 37th Infantry Regiment bound on a reconnaïssance in Northern Korea. After landing and examining Yiwon and the neighbourhood of Hamyengdo the troops were re-embarked, and were returning to Gensan, when, most unfortunately, the *Kinshiu Maru* fell in, off Sinpho, about eleven o'clock in the evening, with Admiral Jessen's three cruisers and two destroyers. It is said that at first the Japanese mistook the Russian ships for part of Admiral Kamimura's squadron, but in any case the mistake made was very quickly discovered. The *Kinshiu Maru* was ordered to stop instantly, one of the destroyers approached her, and the ship's captain, accompanied by a few of the officers, went on board the *Rossia*, where they were apparently detained.

ADMIRAL JESSEN.

It was now intimated to those on board the *Kinshiu Maru* that they must surrender within an hour or be sent to the bottom. Some of the crew had previously taken to the boats, and only soldiers and bluejackets were now left on board. The major in command of the detachment bade his officers and men please themselves as to how they should act. The majority of them decided that they would remain where they were and that there should be no surrender, but, to quote the translation of the official report, "a desperate lieutenant, with seven men, proceeded in a boat to fight the Russians!"

At half-past one in the morning the Russians launched a torpedo at the *Kinshiu Maru*, but it did not explode. The Japanese soldiers were paraded on deck and exchanged shots with the enemy, who naturally replied, killing a number of the officers and men.

"At two o'clock," to quote once more the *Daily Telegraph's* condensed translation of the Japanese official report, "the Russians discharged another torpedo, which struck the *Kinshiu Maru* near the engine-room, and, exploding, broke the vessel in half. The bluejackets then launched the port boats, which were sunk by the guns.

"The Japanese officers retired to their cabins and committed suicide, while the soldiers bayoneted each other. Finally, only fifteen were left alive, and these kept on furiously firing at the Russian ship at a range of 200 metres, until the water reached their knees.

"They then jumped into the water and were rescued by the boats, though they were still under fire. They shouted

'Banzai' and then steered to the west and escaped.

"On the night of April 26th a sergeant with thirty-seven men reached Bayoto, and another boat with eight soldiers arrived at Raiyoka at noon on the 27th. With them were six coolies and three merchants.

"The *Kinshiu Maru* received over 100 shots, and was quite honeycombed. Only sailors and coolies were taken aboard by the *Rossia*, and not a single soldier surrendered."

It is difficult to read the account of this remarkable episode without experiencing some rather mixed sensations. But it is an episode in regard to which it is emphatically desirable to "clear our mind of cant," and, if we do this, there does not seem a great deal left to criticise or rave about. As regards the action of the Russian squadron there can be little real question. By obstinately refusing to surrender, and by subsequently offering armed resistance, the Jap soldiers courted destruction as surely as if they had formed themselves into a square on the battlefield and challenged an overwhelming enemy to "come on." Of course, it would have been more humane, if it had been possible, to overpower them, and to have sent a prize crew aboard the *Kinshiu Maru*. But time pressed, a prize crew could not be spared, and it would have been folly to hamper the movements of a raiding squadron by attaching a slow steamer to it.

There is a strong Western repugnance to the idea that suicide is an honourable means of avoiding capture by a civilised enemy; but *Hari-Kiri* is an ancient Japanese custom, and when some of the Japanese soldiers on the *Kinshiu Maru* adopted this historical, if revolting, method of self-destruction, it is not surprising that others should have followed their ghastly example. For the rest, it is impossible not to admire the fanatical courage displayed by the Japanese soldiers on this occasion in circumstances in which some irresolution might have been excusable. Certain it is that their behaviour was most strongly approved in Japan, the Tokio journals commenting in glowing terms on the display of the "true soldierly spirit which is an invaluable national asset."

According to the Russian account, seventeen officers, presumably belonging to the *Kinshiu Maru*, were taken off by the Vladivostok squadron, together with nearly 200 of the crew and coolies. The casualties of the military detachment were 2 captains, 2 first lieutenants, and 1 second lieutenant, 1 ensign, 73 privates, and 2 interpreters, all killed. Of the surviving soldiers several were wounded.

Admiral Kamimura, on reaching Gensan and learning that the *Kinshiu Maru* had not returned, set out in search of her, and succeeded in picking up some of the ill-fated transport's boats. Afterwards he made fresh attempts to attack Vladivostok, but was foiled by recurring fogs.

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RUSSIAN TROOPS DETRAINING AT PORT ARTHUR.

CHAPTER XVII.

LIFE AT PORT ARTHUR—RUSSIAN CONFIDENCE—JAPANESE CAUTION—ANOTHER ACCIDENTAL EXPLOSION—MORE JAPANESE RUSES—A SUPREME EFFORT—THE HARBOUR BLOCKED—A LANDING.

PORT ARTHUR once more, and this time with increasing urgency, claims our attention. The history of this great stronghold during the first three months of the conflict between Russia and Japan is one of the most interesting chapters in the annals of modern war. Seldom, if ever, in such a short space of time has a place of arms falsified so many predictions, thrown out so many calculations, and yet contrived to illustrate so many of the eternal rules of naval and, to some extent, military strategy.

As we look back over the events which have followed in rapid succession since the attack on the midnight of February 8th, we cannot fail to be struck with the persistence shown by the Russians in regarding Port Arthur as a position in which, whatever misfortune might occur, whatever blows might be suffered, things would eventually right themselves by mere virtue of Russian prestige, and of the extraordinary pains which Russia has taken to render this wonderful fortress absolutely impregnable. There is something almost pathetic in the tenacity with which even official circles in St. Petersburg cling to the belief that even the death of Admiral Makaroff, perhaps the one man in Russia who might have saved the situation at Port Arthur, does not seriously compromise their chances at this critical spot in the theatre of war. For there is more than mere "cheery optimism" in the accounts received from Port Arthur as late as the last week in April. Here are extracts from a telegram received at St. Petersburg on April 24th, which show how national pride, stiffened by impressive surroundings in the way of mighty ramparts and big guns, can blind even intelligent spectators to the presence of grim realities. "A surprising state of tranquillity," says the sender of the telegram, "prevails here. The troops and sailors, as well as the inhabitants, are exhibiting extraordinary indifference to the state of siege. The sinking of the *Petropavlosk* with Admiral Makaroff and his entire staff did not in any way shake the belief that Port Arthur is impregnable, and the speedy defeat of the Japanese is inevitable!" The same correspondent adds that it is only by night that one realises how liable Port Arthur is to sudden attack. Then, as we have previously remarked, the city is plunged in profound darkness, and only the roadstead is lit by the great searchlights. But by day a band plays on the boulevard, "which is thronged with elegantly dressed people and numbers of children at play," and "the restaurants and shops are crowded with customers." Even allowing for some exaggeration—for we know that a large proportion of the civilian residents of Port Arthur have departed, never in all probability to return—there is something very remarkable in this picture of a place which in two and a half months has undergone bombardment after bombardment, in addition to seeing its naval strength repeatedly diminished by the triumphant attacks of a daring enemy. Even if we discount heavily the throngs of fashionably garbed ladies and the numbers of playful children, even if we ourselves refuse to believe that they exist at all, save in the imagination of the correspondent, it is clear that at St. Petersburg such reports are taken quite seriously, and that all the terrible mischances which have occurred in connection with Port Arthur are still looked upon as quite unlikely to have any disastrous ending.

Some may feel disposed to make comparison between Port Arthur at this stage and other places which have been closely pressed by a vigorous enemy. A certain amount of instruction might be derived from such a process, more especially if one took into account such widely different cases as, say, Paris and Ladysmith; but such comparisons are very deceptive. The fact seems to be that, while states of siege constantly bring out remarkable qualities on the part of the besieged, the result varies curiously, not only according to national character, but by reason of a score of other circumstances peculiar to the case in question. What probably has a good deal to do with the indifference of Port Arthur to its surroundings and prospects, gloomy as they are, at the end of April, is the fact that, as yet, the place is not wholly isolated. Though a state of siege exists; though the fleet can hardly be termed "in being"; though the effects of the bombardments are clearly visible; though at any hour of the day another bombardment may commence, and at any hour of the night another desperate attempt be made to block the harbour entrance already studded by nine sunk Japanese merchantmen; there is still communication even by rail with Liao-yang, Mukden, and Harbin, and through these with Russia itself. There is always something reassuring to the timorous mind, and sometimes to minds of stronger fibre, in the thought that an escape to the rear remains practicable in the last resort. While to the naval and military garrison no such reflections are permissible, the civilians who have remained at, or returned to, Port Arthur are not to be blamed if they take comfort from the thought that isolation having been postponed so far may never occur. But Russia as a whole may yet come to rue the blind fatuity which caused her first to expend such lavish care in the fortification of a place which, above all, needs a dominant fleet for its successful protection; and, secondly, to view with such airy indifference possibilities which one blow after another have been bringing nearer and nearer into the domain of grim accomplished facts.

Let us look now at Japan's attitude in regard to Port Arthur. That, too, at first sight seems remarkable as an extraordinary mixture of reckless daring and almost timid caution. Here we have little destroyers running into the very jaws of the Port Arthur dragon, and creating sometimes serious havoc. We see mines laid, and merchantmen planted in the fairway, with a disregard of risks which is almost sublime. We see bombardments carried out with a scientific accuracy which conveys a real lesson even to the most highly trained navy in the world. But we see no attempts to push the advantage beyond a certain well-defined point, no present endeavour to effect the landing by which alone Port Arthur can be isolated and eventually reduced.

It is a marvellous exhibition this, of self-restraint, and there will have been many to misconstrue it, and to doubt whether a bolder policy would not have produced more practical as well as earlier results. But Japan has acted throughout from a fulness of knowledge by the side of which the most brilliant guesses of Western critics are not of much account. Not only does she know her own strength and weakness, but she knows all that is worth knowing of the innermost secrets of the enemy, and there is probably not a nook or cranny of the Port Arthur defences which is not carefully marked on maps and plans in the office of the General Staff at Tokio. Further, with that marvellous astuteness which the Oriental brings to the assimilation of Western ideas, Japan has grasped the fact that in the reduction of Port Arthur the naval problem must be completely solved before the military problem can be attempted by a Power whose resources, neither on sea nor on land, are illimitable. Lastly, in the naval operations against this stronghold no undue risk can be taken, no enterprise sanctioned, such as will endanger a supremacy which may yet be threatened by political complications. Hence the knockings at the door, so to speak, of Port Arthur, the incursions of torpedo craft, the safe bombardments, and, above all, the efforts to "bottle up" what is left of the Port Arthur Fleet so securely as to make the ships little more than badly-placed forts.

When these preliminaries are got through to the point of placing the Port Arthur squadron decisively out of action, then will be Japan's time to act on another plane. We are nearing this point now, and it is advisedly that the foregoing remarks have been inflicted on the reader as a preparation for a very beautifully arranged and dramatic event. The isolation of Port Arthur is a magnificent example of combined naval and military strategy, which can only be properly understood if the steps leading up to it are regarded from some other standpoint than that of a mere succession of stirring deeds of heroism and impressive discharges of big guns.

After the bombardment of April 15th, which Admiral Togo describes as belonging to "the eighth attack on Port Arthur," the Japanese, for quite a considerable time, left the fortress severely alone, and, as we have seen, the band played on the boulevard, the ladies promenaded, and the children played without any tragic interruptions. A rather painful sensation must have been caused by the bringing in of the large launch of the *Petropavlosk* and other relics of the disaster of the 13th. Again, on April 22nd, a lamentable accident occurs which shows how strangely unskilful or careless the Russian sailors must be in the handling of mines, notwithstanding such terrible lessons as they have already received in connection with these dangerous engines. On the day in question some steam launches are engaged in laying mines in the Port Arthur roadstead when, to quote Admiral Alexeieff's despatch to the Tsar, one of the mines "explodes prematurely," and a lieutenant and twenty men are hurried into eternity. One almost shudders to think of what may yet happen in connection with the Russian mines which have not yet "exploded prematurely" in the neighbourhood of Port Arthur. For, where such unhandiness is so tragically demonstrated, it seems doubtful whether any accurate observation has been made by the layers themselves of the actual minefields, and many a future fatality will doubtless occur before this harbour is free from its hidden dangers.

During the night of April 27th, Admiral Togo allows his torpedo craft to attempt another of the ruses which sailors are particularly fond of introducing into the performance of a dangerous enterprise. For some nights previously the Japs have taken advantage of the fact that the Russians have been trying to intercept the enemy's wireless telegrams. A string of mock messages has been despatched, purporting to come from Admiral Togo, and conveying imaginary orders to land near Port Arthur, to attack with submarines, to send fire-ships into the harbour, and so forth. Naturally the interception of these messages has caused the Russians a deal of unnecessary worry. On the night of the 27th, the Japanese "break out in a fresh place," possibly with the intention to make the Russians believe that, after all, there was some genuineness in the captured communications. Stringing together a number of rafts on which inflammable substances are collected, they set these afloat, and tow them to within five miles of the entrance to the harbour. Here the combustibles are set on fire, the result being a great sheet of white flame, which is carried by wind and current towards the land. Under cover of this fiery screen eight torpedo-boats, towing a launch laden with mines, slip round to a spot near that where the *Petropavlosk* was sunk. Presumably the idea is that efforts may be made to recover bodies or treasure from the sunken battleship, and that, in furtherance of such intention, another Russian warship may come out and be similarly destroyed. The mine-layers are, however, detected by the searchlights and driven off. The mines have been suc-

THE INVESTMENT OF PORT ARTHUR: IN ONE OF THE FORTS COMMANDING THE RUSSIAN [illegible] cessfully laid, but their whereabouts having been observed, they are subsequently searched for by the Russians and destroyed. Unsuccessful as the attempt has proved, it must have been somewhat discouraging to the inhabitants of Port Arthur to find the enemy so unwearying in his attentions, so full of fresh resources, and so clearly bent upon the destruction by one means or another, of what is left of Russia's Navy in this harbour.

The beginning of May marks a very important crisis in the history of Port Arthur. Developments now occur on the Yalu, to which detailed reference will be made in a succeeding chapter, and which in the meantime have an important bearing upon Admiral Togo's operations. For throughout the War, so far, nothing is more remarkable than the perfect harmony between the movements of the Japanese Navy and Army, and no student of what has happened could fail to anticipate that any important change of the condition of military affairs on the banks of the Yalu would be promptly followed by increased activity on the part of the ships engaged in harassing Port Arthur.

Hitherto some uncertainty has existed as to the base from which the Japanese Fleet is working; but now it becomes clearly evident that they have been using more particularly the Blonde Islands at the south of the Elliot group, which lies some fifty miles to the north-east of Port Arthur. The whole fleet, it appears, is regularly coaled at sea by ships sent at intervals from Nagasaki and Moji, which also bring ammunition and other supplies.

On May 2nd, Admiral Togo, having been duly apprised of the Yalu developments referred to above, prepares to deliver a fresh and, perhaps, final blow against the freedom of egress which the Russian warships in Port Arthur still enjoy. This time the effort is indeed on a grand scale, and a mere enumeration of the ships and crews shows what risks Admiral Togo is ready to take in furtherance of an object now of really supreme urgency.

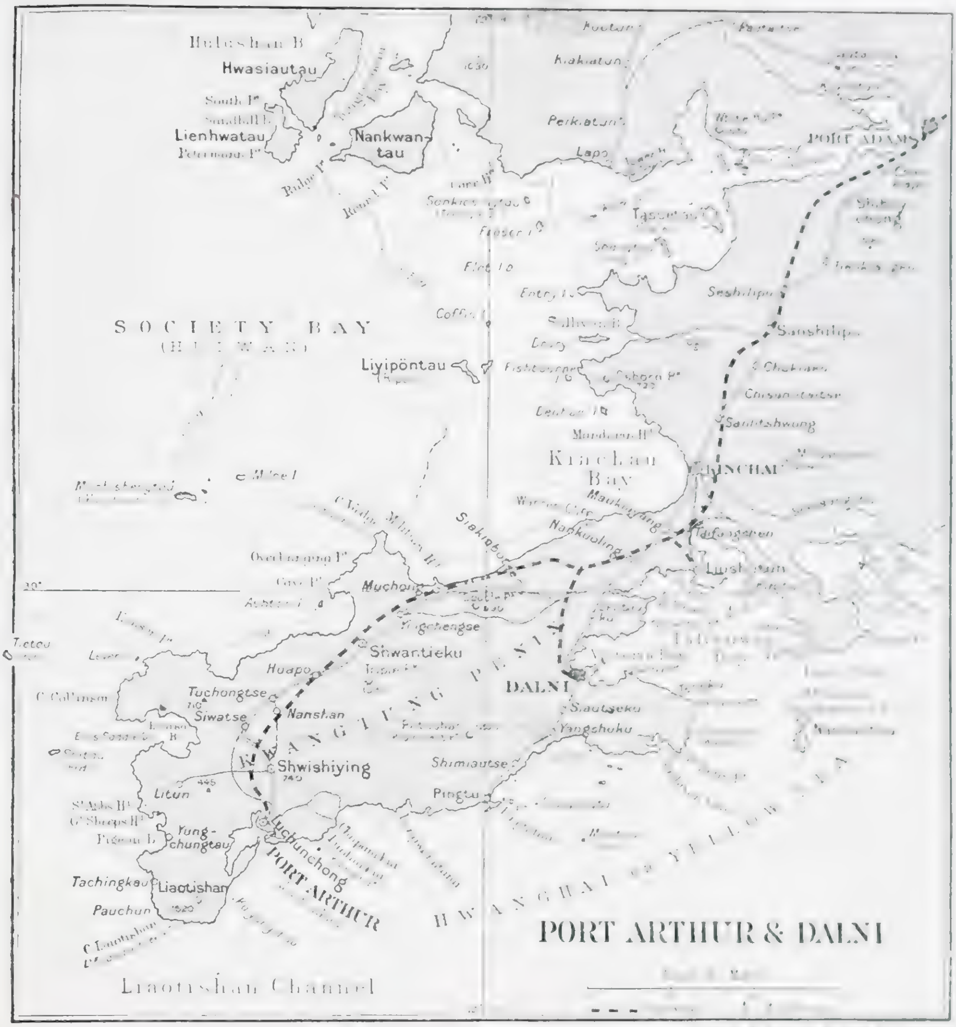
There are no fewer than eight large steamers set aside for this final blocking operation. Their aggregate tonnage is 17,313 gross, and their ages vary from eighteen to twenty-five years. The Russians, therefore, are probably not far wrong in estimating the cost to Japan of these very efficient "fireships" as little short of £200,000. According to the Russian account each steamer is equipped with a small quick-firing gun. The crews of the steamers aggregate 159 men.

The steamers start at night on May 2nd, escorted by the gunboats *Akagi* and *Chokai*, the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th destroyer flotillas, and the 9th, 10th, and 11th torpedo-boat flotillas. The expedition is in charge of Commander Hayashi.

A stiff south-easterly wind is blowing, and as night wears on this freshens into a gale. It becomes impossible to keep the ships together, and Commander Hayashi makes the signal to stop the operation. This signal is repeated until two o'clock in the morning, but somehow, to use Admiral Togo's simple language, "does not reach." One is inclined to suggest that, perhaps, the commanders of the steamers are possessed, like Nelson, of only one serviceable eye apiece, and are disposed to use their blind eyes for the observation of unwelcome signals.

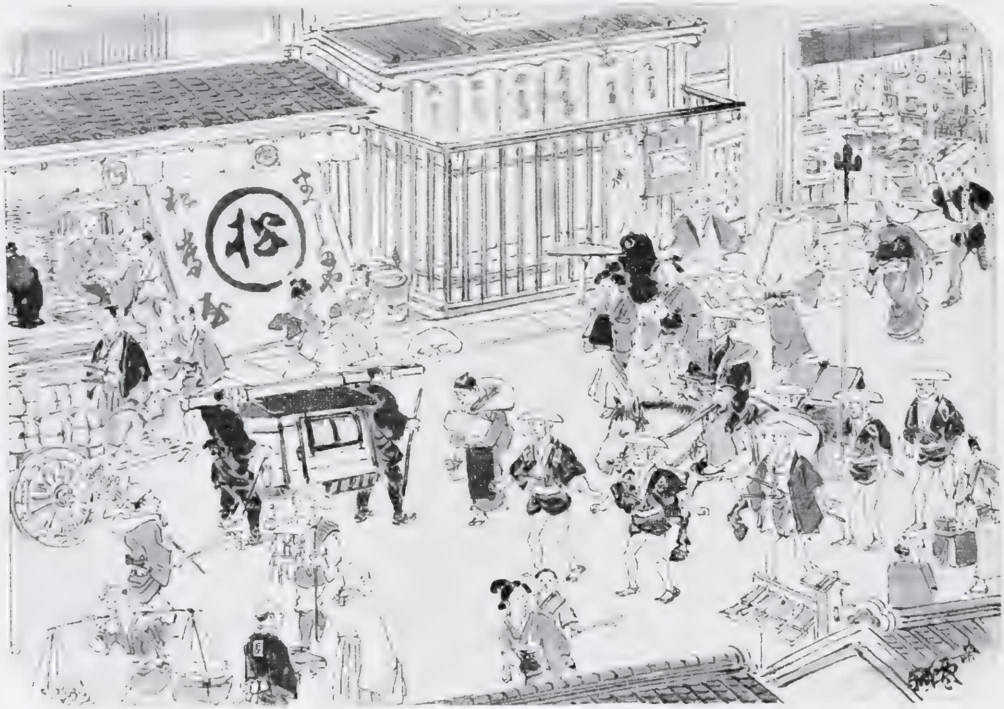
Be this as it may, the eight steamers proceed, not at all in touch, but quite united in the resolution of their crews to carry out their tremendous object to the bitter end.

Meanwhile, one of the torpedo flotillas, racing on, has gained the roadstead and come under the fire of the Russian gunboats stationed on guard at this point. The torpedo-boats run back out into the darkness, and at this moment the first of the steamers, the *Mikawa Maru*, commanded by Lieutenant Sosa, comes upon the scene. Hearing the guns roaring, Lieutenant Sosa believes that some of his comrades have been before him, and makes haste to join them. The searchlights are working—a little to the disadvantage of the Russians this time, for one of the beams plays directly upon the


PORT ARTHUR & DALNI
SOCIETY BAY
Hwasiautau
Lienhwatau
Nankwantau
Liyipöntau
Kinchau Bay
KINCHAU
PORT ADAMS
Sanshilipu
Santaishwang
Liushutun
Muchoni
Shwantieku
Tuchongtse
Siwatse
Nanshan
Shwishiying
Litun
Yungchungtau
Luchunchong
PORT ARTHUR
Liaotishan
Tachingkau
Pauchun
DALNI
Siautseku
Yangshuku
Shimiautse
Pingtu
Huapo
Yingchengse
Liaotishan Channel
HWANGHAI or YELLOW SEA

MAP OF PORT ARTHUR AND DALNI.

harbour entrance and shows the way most conveniently to the *Mikawa Maru*—the forts as well as the gunboats are belching fire, and there are mines everywhere save in a narrow channel, which in such conditions it is hard to pick out. Lieutenant Sosa recks little of these grim obstacles. At full speed he forces along his vessel, rams the boom at the harbour entrance, breaks it, and reaching the centre of the inner entrance, anchors and blows up his ship. As the vessel sinks the crew gather on the prow, and with one loud shout of "Banzai!" go down to glorious death.

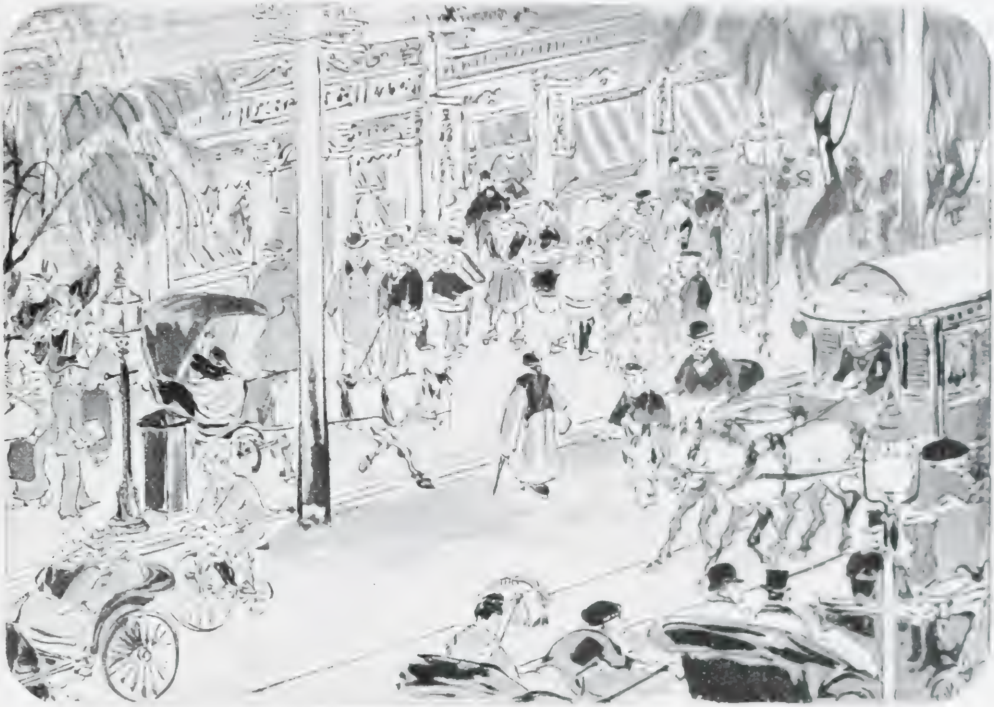

From a Native Drawing.

OLD JAPAN.

A street in Yedo fifty years ago.

Following the *Mikawa Maru* comes the *Sakura Maru*, which anchors near a projecting rock at the mouth of the harbour, and is also blown up and sunk. According to a Russian eye-witness the Japanese upon this second "fireship"—this is the description habitually given in the Russian accounts of these blocking operations, although, as a matter of fact, the vessels are not being used as fireships at all—climb upon the masts and, brandishing lanterns, make signals to their comrades. Boats are lowered by the Japs, but the idea of escape is evidently accounted of small importance as compared with the businesslike completion of the work in hand. The chance, too, is a well-nigh desperate one. The boats are swept by a veritable hailstorm of bullets and fragments of shell, but it is recorded by the Russian correspondent quoted above that "never a flag, handkerchief, or rag is waved in sign of readiness to surrender." It is interesting to note that, even in this extremely "warm corner," Japanese artifice is displayed by the escaping crews. At intervals all the men on a boat cease rowing and pretend to be dead or wounded. Then in a lull they spring to life, seize their oars, and ply them lustily.

On the heels of the *Mikawa Maru* and the *Sakura Maru* come the *Totomi Maru*, *Yedo Maru*, *Otaru Maru*, *Sagami Maru*, *Aikoku Maru*, and *Asagawo Maru*. It is now about three o'clock in the morning, and the scene must be one of extraordinary picturesqueness and exciting activity. On the Russian side there are three warships, the *Otvajny*, the *Giliak*, and *Gremiashtchi*, engaged, besides the forts, and the firing, which has already lasted for an hour, is, practically speaking, continuous until 4 a.m. On the *Otvajny* is Admiral Alexeieff himself with General Gilinski and Captain Eberhardt of the Naval General Staff. General Gilinski, whose portrait was given on page 126, is, it will be remembered, Chief of the Staff to General Kuropatkin, and has doubtless come to Port Arthur to confer with Admiral Alexeieff as to the military measures now to be taken with reference to the situation on the Yalu. General Stoessel, whose supersession by General "Seven



From a Native Drawing.

NEW JAPAN.

A main street of Tokio of to-day.

Devils" Smirnoff has, apparently, been postponed *sine die*, is on the fortifications, and Rear-Admiral Loshchinsky, Chief of the Defence Force of Port Arthur, is on board the *Giliak*.

Some mixed reflections must arise in the minds of these high officials as they look out on the bewildering scene before them. All round them is the deafening roar of their own guns, and yonder, in the narrow channel, mines are exploding; little quick-firers barking; steamers are blowing up and sinking; boats are struggling in a rough sea flecked with patches of white froth caused by the bursting of shells on impact or by the hail of bullets from machine guns and rifles on shore; and Jap destroyers and torpedo-boats are darting hither and thither trying to save the survivors from the sunken ships. A spectacle, indeed, of lurid fascination to anyone, but how strangely thrilling to men like Alexeieff and Gilinski, the former knowing that for much of the results of this night's work he will be held morally responsible by his Imperial Master and by his countrymen generally; while the latter, fresh from the arrogant atmosphere of St. Petersburg officialism, is having his eyes opened somewhat suddenly to the sort of spirit which animates these "yellowskins." Holy Russia knows well and can appreciate fanatical courage. The Army which presented arms to Osman Pasha when he came forth to surrender Plevna, his superb defence of which had cost Russia such a terrible price, can respect a brave enemy. To Alexeieff the sight of the sinking merchantmen must have appealed with particularly gloomy force. But to Gilinski the vision of these scores of men, not only recklessly indifferent to the preservation of their lives, not merely filled with what Lord Wolseley calls "that dreadful two o'clock in the morning courage," but doing their difficult work as cleverly, as completely, as if in broad daylight and with no enemy within a hundred miles—such a vision must bring something of a quick sensation of doubt and apprehension lest for Russia's Army, as well as for her Navy, there may be trying times in store.

To return to the steamers, some of these, as they near the harbour entrance, not only meet the full brunt of the Russian fire, but run upon sunken mines, which cause numerous casualties, and must have hindered the operation had not an ample margin in the number of steamers been provided.

Some interesting details are furnished in a Reuter telegram from Tokio which is apparently based upon Admiral Togo's official reports. Thus it is established that the *Totomi Maru*, though it does not get quite so far in as the *Mikawa Maru*, strikes against the boom, and sinks athwart the passage, blocking nearly half of it.

When the *Yedo Maru* reaches the entrance and is getting out her anchor, Commander Takayanagi is shot in the stomach and killed. No confusion or delay is caused by this serious loss. Sub-Lieutenant Nagatu assumes command, and under his orders the anchor is let go and the ship sunk.

Two other vessels, believed to be the *Otaru Maru* and the *Sagami Maru*, enter the mouth of the harbour and sink. Putting aside the *Sakura Maru*, which, as we have seen, lies on a projecting rock, there are now five vessels sunk actually in the entrance to the harbour, and, as all are laden with stones, the blocking of the fairway, at least for cruisers and battleships, appears to be fairly complete. There are two steamers yet unaccounted for, one of which, the *Aikoku Maru*, strikes a mine five cables from the mouth, explodes and sinks, carrying with her, it is feared, her Lieutenant, Uchida, the Chief Engineer, Aoki, and eight of her crew.

One ship, believed to be the *Asagawo*, appears to have had her rudder broken, and to have blown up at the foot of Golden Hill.

In his official report Admiral Togo says: "The undertaking, when compared with the two last attempts, involved a heavier casualty on our side owing to the inclemency of the weather and increased preparation for the defence of the enemy. We could not save any of the officers and men of the *Otaru Maru*, *Sagami Maru*, *Sakura Maru*, and *Asagawo Maru*, and I regret that nothing particular could be learned about the gallant way in which they discharged their duties, although the memory of their exemplary conduct will long survive in the Imperial Navy.

"The destroyer and torpedo flotillas, besides resisting the enemy bravely, fought against the wind and waves. The torpedo flotilla closely approached the mouth of the channel and rescued more than half of the men. Torpedo-boat 67, which had a steam-pipe broken by a shell, was disabled, but her consort, torpedo-boat 70, went to her assistance and towed her away. Three of the crew were wounded.

"The destroyer *Awovta* had her port engine damaged by a shell and one sailor was killed. A sailor in the torpedo-boat *Hayabusa* was also killed by a shell."

Some of the incidents of this remarkable episode forcibly illustrate the frenzied enthusiasm of the Japs in connection with such desperate enterprises. It is recorded that a sailor, who had escaped from his steamer after it had been sunk, managed to struggle ashore under Electric Cliff. Here he was surrounded and called upon to surrender, "but in answer he rushed wildly upon the Russians with a revolver and bravely met his death. Another Japanese bluejacket," continues this Russian account, "was drowning when our men dragged him from the waves, but once out of the water he endeavoured to strangle himself with his neck-tie." Later, one captive officer performed *Hara-kiri*, declaring that he would rather die than go back "with shame" to his country.

It must be recorded to the credit of the Russians that, in spite of the unwillingness of the Japanese to be taken alive, and notwithstanding the heavy sea, every possible effort was made to effect rescues, and thirty men, of whom fifteen died immediately either from their wounds or by their own hands, were picked up, covered carefully with cloaks, and carried ashore.

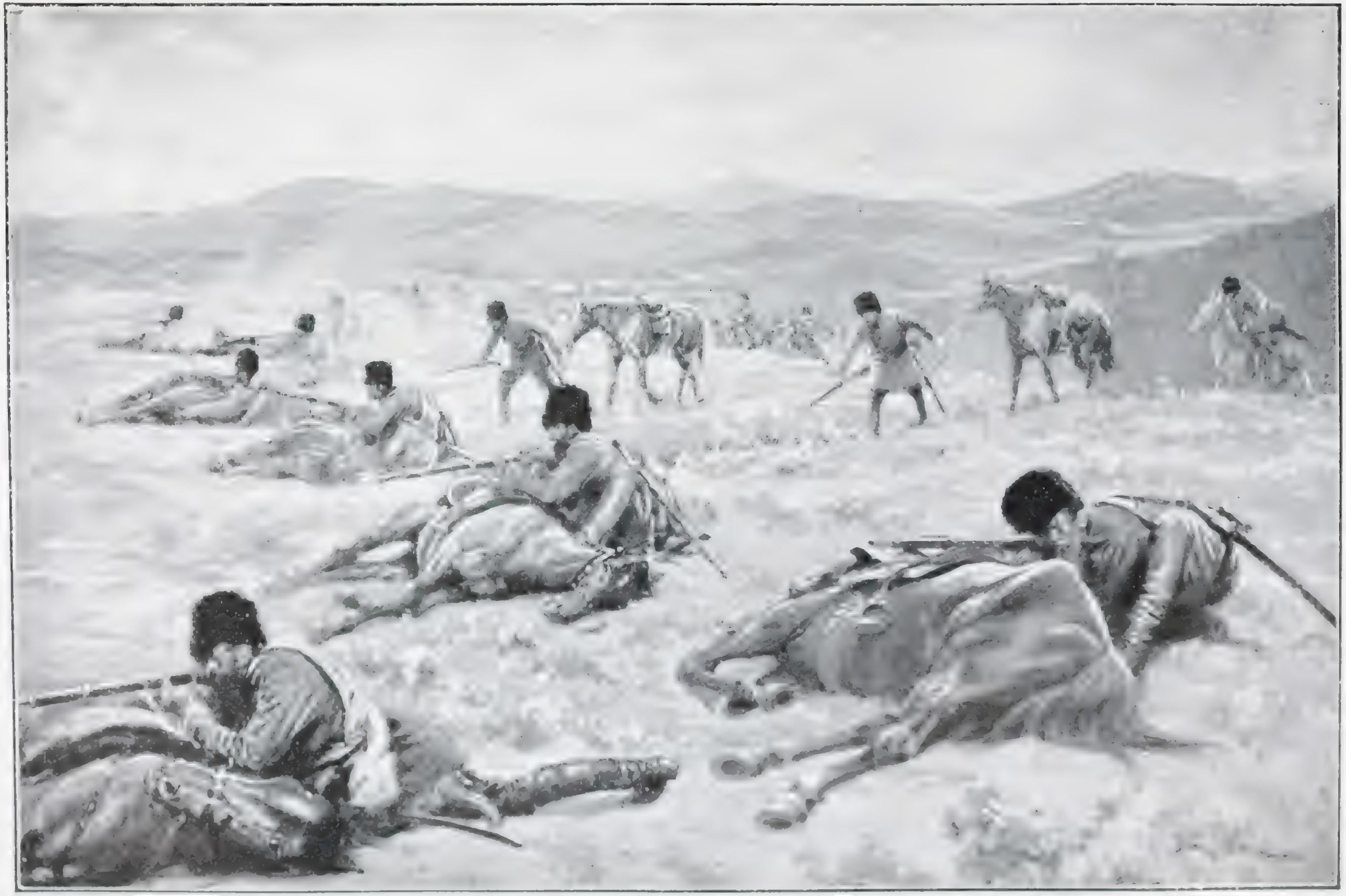
The crews of the steamers, as noted above, aggregated 159. Of these 36 returned safely, 18 were wounded, 15 were known to have been killed, and 90 were missing. Of the latter we have seen that 30 were rescued, but that of these one-half died. The total loss of life therefore was 80, the officers killed and missing being returned at 15. Posthumous honours were at once conferred by the Mikado upon the gallant dead, and their families pensioned, all the surviving officers, too, being decorated.

Thus terminates an exploit which, save for its two predecessors, is without any precise parallel in the history of warfare. Even in Russia the "unparalleled heroism and fury" with which the crews of the steamers fought is clearly recognised, and a St. Petersburg correspondent adds that "indescribably profound" is the impression produced by this extraordinary fearlessness, which positively courts death, and by the complete mastery of the technical side of war displayed by the Japanese. In a passage which seems to mark the beginning of a great awakening the *Novoye Vremya* admits that Russia has greatly underrated its enemy. "The cowardice of the Chinese led us to draw false conclusions respecting the bravery of the Japanese." The important St. Petersburg organ adds, rather sadly, that evidently, while Russia has failed to understand Japan, the Japs have thoroughly studied Russia.

It will be readily understood that these sentiments are widely echoed in other countries of the civilised world. It is felt that, apart from the measure of success actually achieved, there is something strangely impressive in the persistence shown by the Japanese in their efforts to attain an object surrounded by no halo of sentiment, as in the case of an attempt to relieve a beleaguered garrison, and certainly remote from anything akin to desperate self-preservation. In the first instance discretion was undoubtedly displayed by the selection of a method of destroying Port Arthur's usefulness as a naval base, which is far less costly than any direct attack could possibly be; secondly, caution has been exercised in not risking any but small fighting ships within range of the fort guns. But, the scheme once framed, it has been carried out with a dogged resolution and a superb gallantry which are not surpassed even in our own splendid annals of naval and military heroism.

Admiral Togo having thus vigorously responded to the call made upon him by the progress of events on the Yalu, is able to devote his energies to the advancement of the land campaign, of which there is presently a striking development of peculiar interest to Port Arthur.

From quite the commencement of the war a great deal of strategical interest has been centred at Niu-chwang, a place of considerable importance on the Liao River at the head of the Liao-tung Gulf. A glance at the war map issued with the opening chapters of this publication will show that a Japanese control of Niu-chwang, if it ever comes about, will effect a double object by threatening Mukden and by isolating Port Arthur. For the first two months of the war Niu-chwang, which is sometimes alluded to by the name of its port, Ying-kau, does not come into serious prominence, since the estuary of the Liao is blocked with ice, and any idea of a landing is quite out of the question. But a great deal of speculation exists as to the future proceedings at this point, and in the middle of March a considerable exodus of civilian inhabitants takes place. About this time the Russians take serious steps to place Niu-chwang in a state of defence. Early in April there were four or five thousand Russian troops at Niu-chwang, and these on April 6th were reviewed by General Kuropatkin, who seems to have hastened on the defensive preparations. For, ten days later, we hear of a fairly elaborate scheme of fortification, together with a scheme of submarine mines worked from one of the forts. In our own House of Commons, too, a good deal of discussion is aroused by the withdrawal of the British gunboat which has been lying,



THE COSSACK AND HIS HORSE: A DEVICE FOR SECURING COVER DURING A SKIRMISH frozen-up, in the Liao, and fears are expressed lest in its absence British interests, and perhaps lives, at Niu-chwang may be endangered.

It is clear that, with the Port Arthur harbour entrance now more or less effectually sealed, with the ice in the Liao broken up and, what is still more important, melted, above all with a marked forward movement taking place from the Yalu, there is a strong chance that, before long, some change will take place in the prospects of Niu-chwang, a change which may seriously affect the condition of Port Arthur. This view receives dramatic confirmation by the receipt of news at the latter place early in the morning of May 5th to the effect that a number of Japanese transports have arrived off the east coast of the Liao-tung Peninsula, obviously with the intention to effect a landing near Pi-tsu-wo, which lies about sixty miles north-east of Port Arthur.

Pi-tsu-wo is a place with a history which goes far to explain the present proceedings. Here it was that the Japanese concentrated their Second Army in the war with China in 1894, after the First Army had crossed the Yalu. From Pi-tsu-wo the road, after crossing the peninsula to Pu-lan-tien, can be followed to Niu-chwang, but there is also a south-westerly route to Kinchau, which is about thirty miles from Port Arthur. According to the first intimation of the landing which was received by the Ministry of War at St. Petersburg, a number of the enemy's transports bore down upon Pi-tsu-wo on the morning of May 5th, and the Russian posts thereupon retired from the shore. The papers of the post-office were removed, and the Russian inhabitants abandoned the town. It was afterwards reported that the enemy had landed about 10,000 troops by the evening, and despatched two columns of about one regiment each, one in a westerly direction and another in a south-westerly direction.

The effect of this intelligence upon the Port Arthur garrison, as may be readily imagined, is electrical. The immediate result is the departure of Admiral Alexeieff to rejoin, by Imperial Ukase it is said, the active Army. As the news of the Japanese landing must have reached Port Arthur about eight in the morning, and Admiral Alexeieff leaves at eleven, it is sufficiently clear that early and complete isolation of the stronghold is apprehended, and colour is lent to this view by the fact that the Grand Duke Boris Vladimirovitch has also left Port Arthur. The command of the fleet in harbour is temporarily entrusted to Admiral Vitgert.

Towards evening a passenger train which, notwithstanding the tranquility said to prevail in the place—as if tranquility in such obviously alarming circumstances were possible—has left Port Arthur crowded with passengers and with about 200 sick, meets with a dramatic experience. As it nears Pu-lan-tien station a Cossack is observed making frantic signals, and the train slows down to hear what he has to say. "Go back," he shouts, "the Japanese are coming!" But it is decided to press on, and a mile and a quarter before reaching Pu-lan-tien a group of Japanese infantry are observed on an eminence about 1,500 yards to the east of the line. A puff of smoke is seen, and the bullets come pattering round the train. The passengers throw themselves on the floor of the carriages, but two sick soldiers are unfortunately wounded.

The ambulance carriages are said to be flying the Red Cross flag, but it is quite possible that, in the doubtful light, and at 1,500 yards range, this was not noticed by the Japanese, who would be the first to deplore any departure from the humanity they have always observed. Save for the casualties mentioned, the train, which is naturally travelling at its best speed, succeeds in reaching Pu-lan-tien without further mishap.

Later it is reported that the Japanese have actually cut the line, and so, for a time, it is believed that at last Port Arthur is completely isolated.

This gloomy belief proves to be unfounded as far as the immediate present is concerned. It is true that, immediately after the landing near Pi-tsu-wo small forces of Japanese have reached the rail and cut it in several places, but they have apparently retired, since a train full of ammunition for Port Arthur has been got through, and Pu-lan-tien station, according to an explicit Russian statement, is, on May 10th, being held by the Russian Frontier Guards. The railway has been repaired by the 4th Railway Battalion under command of Colonel Spiridonoff, and the pluck shown by that gallant officer in taking the train-load of ammunition through to Port Arthur in such apparently perilous circumstances seems fully deserving of the commendation it receives from General Kuropatkin. For all that was known to the contrary, the Japanese might be lying in wait at several points of the journey, and it was necessary to make careful preparations for blowing up the train in order to prevent its valuable contents passing into the enemy's hands.

For the greater part of this anxious time a portion of Admiral Togo's Fleet has been observed at intervals cruising round Port Arthur, and on May 11th a report is received at Tokio from him to the effect that since May 6th a number of explosions have been heard taking place at Port Arthur. It is suggested that the Russians are blowing up their ships preparatory to evacuating the fortress, but the more hopeful Russian view is that attempts are merely being made to clear away some of the sunk merchantmen, and to blow up obstacles to the Russian line of fire on land.

Hitherto no explicit reference has been made to what occurred on the banks of the Yalu, but the time has now come when this development can be appropriately revealed. Perhaps the simplest method of doing this will be to quote the stirring order issued by General Stoessel, the Commandant of Port Arthur, on May 6th :—

"On April 30 and May 1 the enemy crossed the Yalu in great force, and our troops fell back on positions which had been previously selected.

"Yesterday the enemy effected an important landing on the Liao-tung Peninsula, south of Pi-tsu-wo, and in the vicinity of Kin-chau Bay.

"Now our work is beginning.

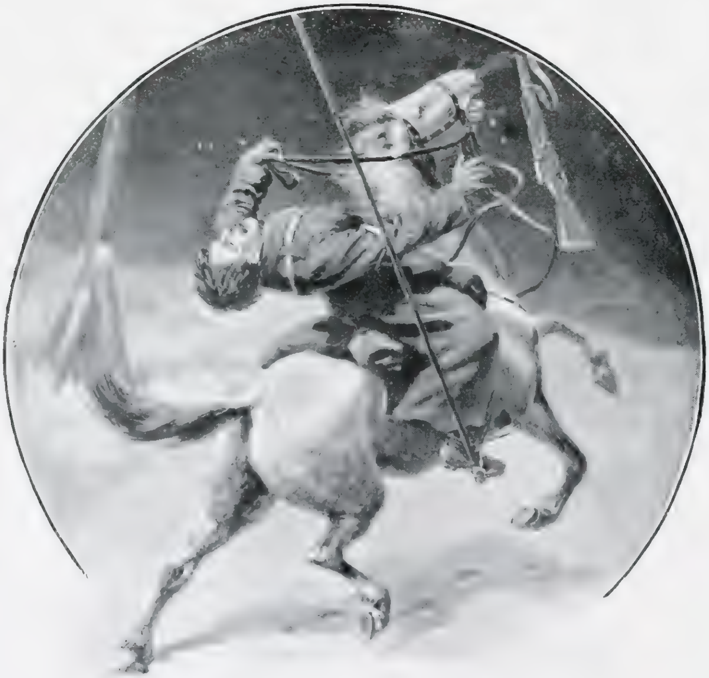
"Naturally the enemy will destroy railway communication, and endeavour to drive our troops back to Port Arthur and besiege this fortress, Russia's bulwark in the Far East.

"Defend it until the arrival of the troops which are coming to relieve us.

"I consider it my duty to call upon you to display unceasing vigilance and caution, and you must be ready at all times to demean yourselves towards your general with the dignity and order beseeming the glorious troops of Russia.

"No matter what happens, you must not lose your heads, but remember that everything is possible in war, and that we shall be able, with the help of God, to cope with the arduous task imposed upon us."

It will be noted that General Stoessel alludes to more than one Japanese landing, and it is a fact that another and important disembarkation took place. But we may conveniently leave any detailed allusion to this operation to a future date. What we have now to deal with is the immediate effect of a Japanese landing in the Liao-tung Peninsula on the position at Port Arthur. We have seen that, at any rate, the Russian authorities are under no illusion on the subject, although some temporary hopefulness may have been inspired in the minds of the Port Arthur garrison by Colonel Spiridonoff's exploit. It appears, moreover, that at a ceremonial parade at Port Arthur held on May 6th, General Stoessel, in a speech to those present, definitely alludes to the "new phase the war has taken, whereby Port Arthur is threatened on the land side," and expresses firm confidence in the endurance of the garrison. The soldiers and sailors answer the Commandant's stirring address with cheers, and this seems an appropriate moment at which to leave Port Arthur, and to turn to the exciting work which, more especially during the past ten days, has been accomplished first on the Yalu, and afterwards between the right bank of that river and General Kuropatkin's headquarters, now at Liao-Yang.



SHOT!

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE YALU—OPPOSING FORCES—JAPANESE PREPAREDNESS—THE [illegible]—THE TWO POSITIONS—PRELIMINARY EFFORTS—THE PASSAGE OF THE YALU.

AT the close of Chapter XIII. the Russians and Japanese were face to face on the Yalu, and already some few shots had been exchanged by sharpshooters and patrols. It was then the beginning of the third week in April, and, although no great movement was observable, it was evident that big events were imminent, and careful preparations were being made on both sides of the stream for an early and possibly hand-to-hand struggle.

It is impossible to have any proper understanding of what is about to take place in this interesting vicinity unless one makes on effort to obtain at any rate an outline idea of the circumstances. It is sometimes possible to make a battle quite interesting without entering into any explanation, save such as can be briefly interposed in an exciting narrative. But that is generally out of the question nowadays, when large bodies of troops are concerned, and more especially, perhaps, when in the course of the proceedings a considerable river has to be crossed. The operation about to be described occupied in all six days, five of which were taken up in what may be termed preliminary fighting. It is clear that even the most thrilling account of such a protracted engagement—for it really was one engagement, although for the purpose of this narrative it will be convenient to separate the passage of the Yalu from the resultant battle—would become exceedingly obscure, and very probably tedious as well, without some knowledge of the ground [illegible] and of the units engaged.

Accordingly, let us commence by making a steady and impartial survey of both forces, and then try to form a general idea of the problem each has to face—the one having as its object to cross a most troublesome river in the teeth of severe opposition, and then to carry a difficult and stubbornly defended position; the other compelled by various reasons to stand on an unwelcome defensive, and endeavour to hurl back a numerically superior enemy known to be in first-class fighting trim, and to be greatly heartened by successes already achieved.

Let us take the Russians first. During the last two weeks in April the Russian force on the Yalu appears to have grown considerably until it approximates the strength of a full-grown Army Corps. As a matter of fact, the force was a mixed one, consisting of a variety of units among which were included the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 22nd, 23rd, and 27th Regiments of East Siberian Infantry, each containing three battalions; one battalion of the 24th Regiment; five batteries of field artillery, each of eight guns; a battery of eight machine guns; a sapper battalion; and a number of Cossacks. It is estimated by the Japanese that there were altogether some 30,000 Russians on the right bank of the Yalu, but it is doubtful whether more than two-thirds of that number, at the very most, took part simultaneously in the fighting at any one stage. The Cossacks, under General Mishtchenko of Chong-ju renown, seem to have been operating mostly at the mouth of the Yalu, where various feints were made by the Japanese, doubtless for the express purpose of keeping them occupied. It is also suggested in a thoughtful study of the operations by the military correspondent of the *Times*, to which the present writer is indebted for much assistance, that several regiments not engaged in the final struggle were holding points either on the upper reaches of the river or on the line of communications.

One Russian division, the 3rd, was fairly complete, and was under the command of General Kashtalinski, a gallant and level-headed officer who until recently had been in command on the Yalu, having superseded General Mishtchenko, but who himself had just been superseded by General Sassulitch commanding the 3rd Siberian Army Corps.

Probably the main difficulty which the Russians had still to encounter was that of supplies. Even 20,000 Russians consume a good deal of food, and, although until now the line of communications with Liao-Yang had been quite secure, the business of feeding continuously such a large force at such a distance from any really well-supplied base must have been terribly trying. It is important to emphasise this point, as it bears directly upon the action of the Russian military authorities in regard both to the resistance offered at this point and to the subsequent movement in retreat. It may never be known how great an effort it was even to keep 20,000 or 30,000 men on the Yalu during these few weeks, and it is quite certain that the amount of positive privation suffered by the Russian troops themselves in this dreary interval will always remain obscure.

For the rest, the Russians appear to have worked as hard, and to have been as vigilant, as circumstances would allow. Entrenchments were thrown up and occupied day in and day out until the conditions must have been frightfully detrimental to both health and *morale*. The appearance of some of the soldiers killed in the fighting showed that they must have lived actually in the trenches for days, and the marvel is that in such circumstances they fought as well as they did. For even with British soldiers it has been found—the siege of Sevastopol is the historic case in point—that prolonged sojourn in trenches is not the best preparation for desperate fighting.

Let us now turn to the Japanese, whom we left gradually increasing their forces on the south bank of the Yalu until the whole of the First Army, consisting of the Guards Division, and the 2nd and 12th Divisions, are concentrated in the fourth week in April in the vicinity of Wi-ju, and to the south-east of that town. We have already seen what difficulties the Japanese had to encounter in their march northwards, but a touch of graphic colour may be borrowed at this point from a despatch sent off from the Yalu on April 28th by Major MacHugh, the *Daily Telegraph's* special correspondent with the Japanese Army, who says:—

"The Japanese troops are now in position. Their march was accomplished in the face of terrible difficulties. The roads were nearly impassable, but the Japanese succeeded in getting through with their transports and guns. I am filled with admiration for the excellence of their organisation and its smoothness of working.

"Between Ping-Yang and Chong-ju the Japanese almost re-made the road. Miles of it were repaired, timber being used as a foundation across the rice fields, and new bridges were built across the large rivers. The Japanese engineers carried out this work with rough timber cut from the neighbouring woods, and with this material they erected strong and durable bridges.

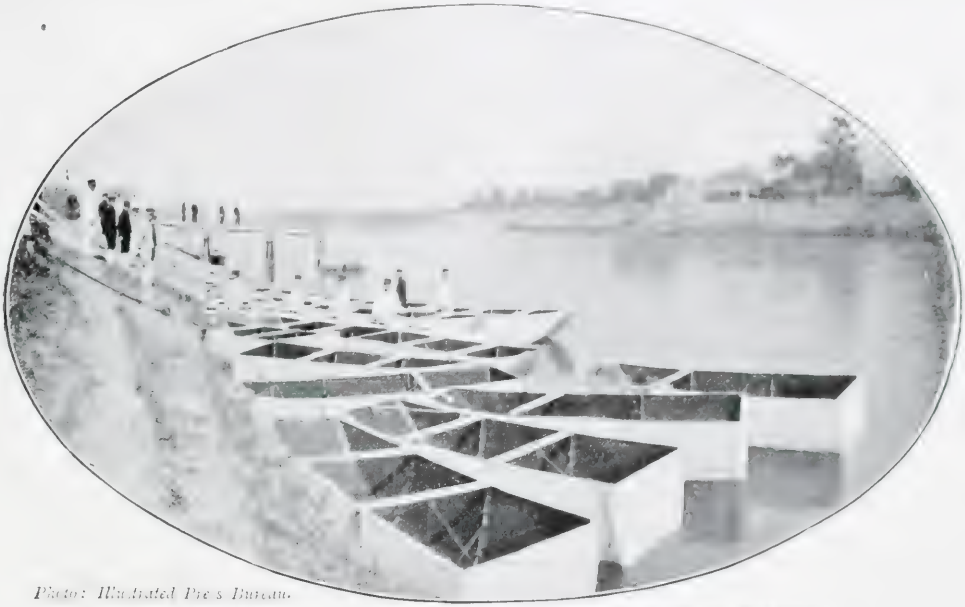


Photo: Illustrated Press Bureau.

JAPANESE PIONEERS BUILDING A BRIDGE: SHOWING FORM OF PONTOONS.

"An enormous army of coolies and pack-horses has been employed in carrying stores to the front. Coolies cover the roads, both coming and going, like ants, each with a weight of 150 lb. on his back. Large numbers of small carts, drawn by three soldiers each, are also employed, and by these means the Japanese staff have placed an ample supply of stores at the front."

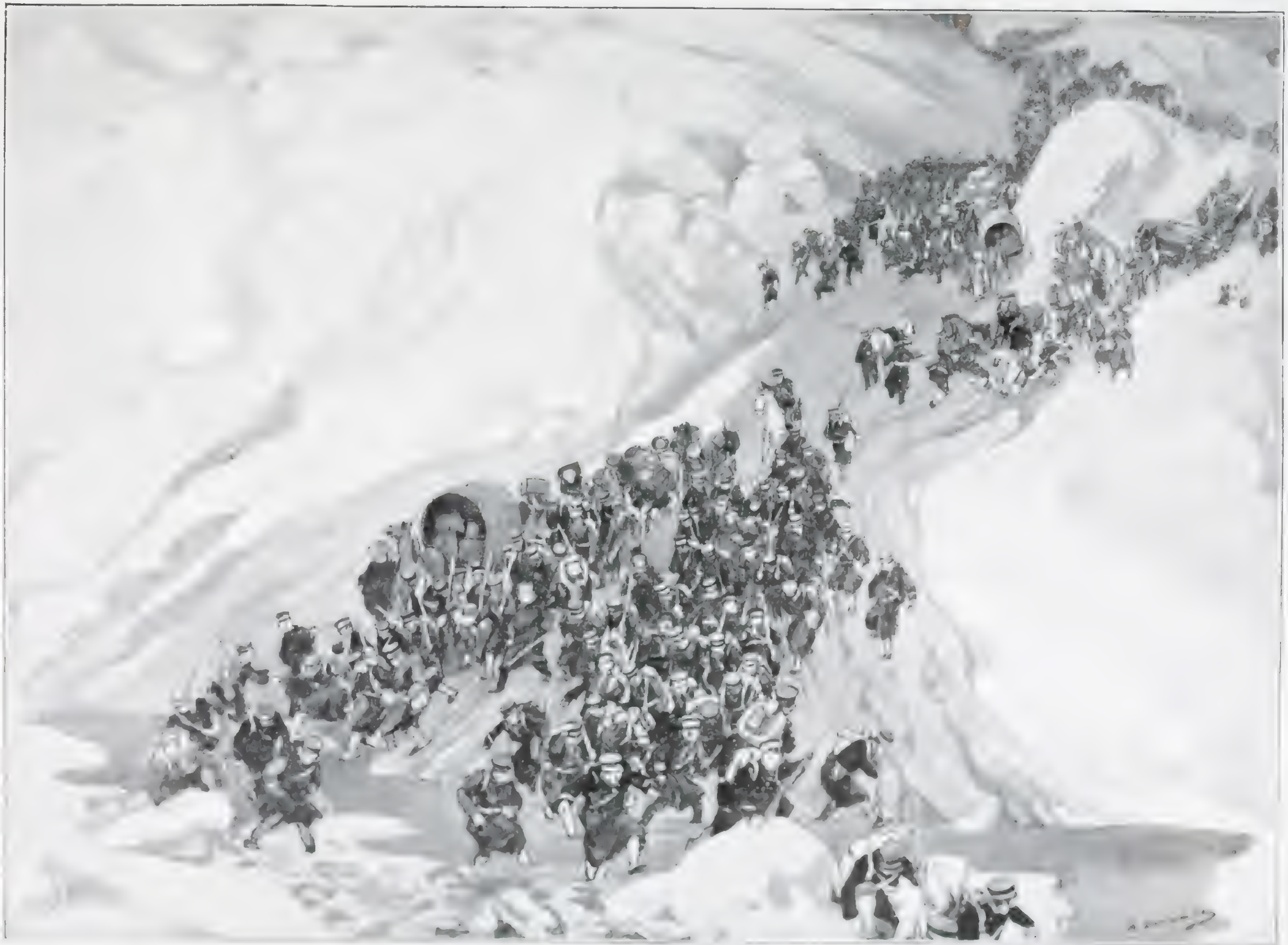
It is an interesting and immensely important feature of the Japanese preparations for the crossing of the Yalu that a large number of howitzers and other heavy guns should be included in their artillery, as it was in ours in South Africa. The Japs have clearly studied every recent campaign to the fullest advantage, and, as will be seen, their precautions in this particular case have not been wasted. At the same time it will be understood that the transport of these large guns must have added most seriously to the difficulties of an already exhausting march, and it is a matter of legitimate speculation, whether, in such circumstances, a little of the right kind of Cossack raiding would not have proved singularly effective.

Another significant and extraordinarily valuable adjunct to the coming operations of the Japanese is the pontoon train. Most civilians at one time or another have seen pontoons, which may be generally described as flat-bottomed punts, constructed of wood and canvas and covered in on the top, which are set afloat in a stream with beams and planks laid on them so as to form a floating bridge. The Japanese pontoon is a model of ingenuity and efficiency, being 24 feet long and 4 feet wide with a buoyancy of 5,500 lb. "It is divided," the *Times* military correspondent tells us, "into two halves, each of which can be used as a boat, while these again are divisible into three sections, two of which form a load for a pack animal. Thus roadless and mountainous country has no terrors for the Japanese pontooner, and some of us may recall with a shudder those enormous and ponderous barges which were dragged painfully about the valley of the Tugela by long teams of oxen, and may wonder what the Japanese Attaché thought of the art of British war."

The supply arrangements of the First Army are evidently perfect, and the Commissariat has no difficulty in providing for a force probably more than twice as large as that which is faring so hardly on the opposite bank of the river. Even though the surrounding country may not yield much in the way of food—for the Russians during their previous occupation seem to have gutted the villages pretty thoroughly—the transports have brought ample supplies to Chinnampo, which are being stored in great quantities at Ping-Yang and thence brought up as required to Wi-ju.

The First Army of Japan is, as has been mentioned, commanded by General Baron Kuroki, an officer of whom Colonel Vannovsky, formerly Russian Military Attaché in Japan, had the presumption to say recently that much was not to be expected, on the ground that the General was over sixty years of age. It is true that Baron Kuroki is about as old as Lord Roberts was when the latter went out to South Africa to give the whole world a lesson in strategy and leadership, and the Russians will find, as the Boers did, that three-score is not necessarily the limit of military activity even in these days when young generals are as common as they were in Napoleon's Army. Kuroki is of the school that trusts little to chance, although by birth a typical Satsuma and, as a natural consequence, a man of the highest spirit and courage. In the Chino-Japanese war of 1894-1895 he was largely engaged at headquarters, in conection with mobilisation and other Staff matters, until the campaign was nearly over, but was given a division in time to share in the victory at Wei-hai-Wei. He is now universally regarded as "a first-class fighting man, whose policy consists in not hurrying his preparations but making everything ready, to the last button. When all is in order he strikes, and he strikes hard."

The Japanese are evidently burning with anxiety to commence the conflict, and are confident of victory. These sentiments are reflected in the boldness of the scouts, who constantly cross the river and even penetrate some distance into what is really the Russian position. It must be taken into account that, excellent as is, in any case, the spirit of the Japanese soldiery, it is being notably inflamed in the present instance by the reports received of the heroic attempts made by the Japanese Fleet to bottle up the Russian ships in Port Arthur. It is probably only by the exercise of the severest discipline that the Jap soldiers are restricted at this point from dashing into emulative exploits of quite an insane description, and it speaks volumes for Japanese military system that the First



A TOILSOME MARCH: SOME DIFFICULTIES OF THE JAPANESE ARMY IN KOREA

Army was kept so completely in hand as it was until the time came to make a call upon it.

And now let us endeavour to form some notion of the tract of country over which the fighting is about to take place. This is no easy matter, for the Russian position appears to have originally extended for about 20 miles, although ultimately it became contracted to about 4 miles. Moreover, owing to the splitting up of the main stream of the Yalu by islands, and to the existence of a considerable tributary, the Ai river, which plays an important part in the fighting, it is only by the exercise of care and discrimination that confusion can be avoided.

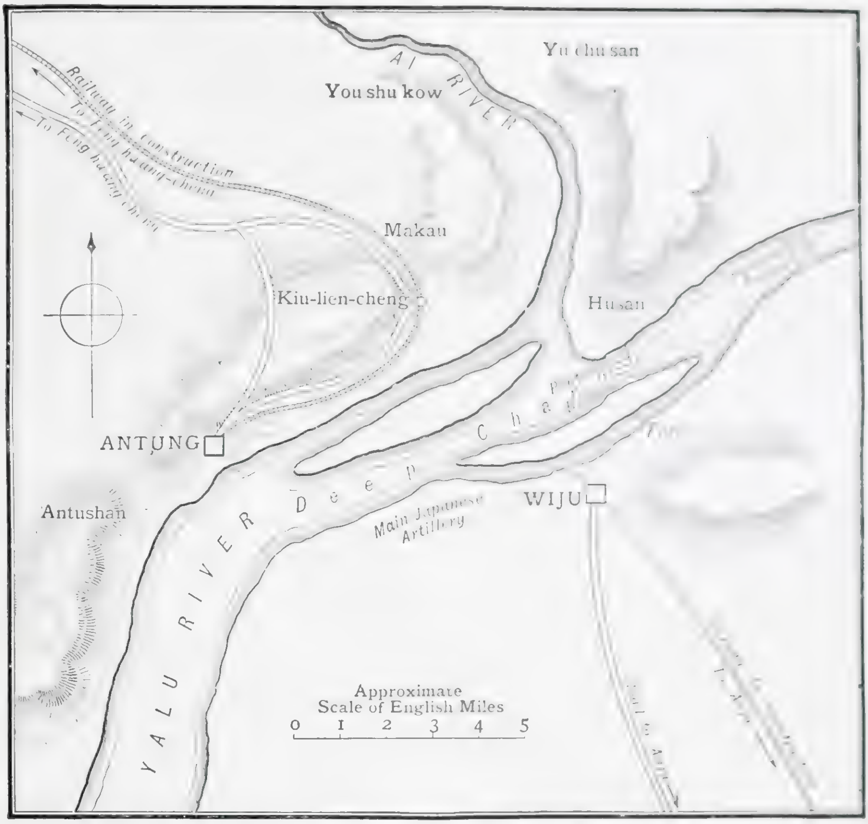
The first point to remember is that the Yalu at Wi-ju is about three miles wide, and is divided by two islands into three streams, of which the central stream alone requires bridging, the other two being fordable waist-deep. The island near the Russian side is called Cheun-song-do, that before Wi-ju, Kin-tatao. These islands consist of low sandy plains only a few feet above the water, with very little in the way of anything that can be used as cover.

It is rather a pathetic circumstance that, throughout the early movements on the Yalu, there should still be some Koreans living in the islands that lie between the opposing forces. These poor wretches have dug holes under their houses, and into these they crawl hurriedly as soon as the firing begins. It would, perhaps, be difficult to find the doctrine that "there's no place like home" more quaintly exemplified.

Two or three miles above Wi-ju the river forks like the upper part of a capital Y. The stream nearer to the Russian position is the Ai tributary, which is fordable breast high and has a soft bottom. The other stream is the Yalu proper, and just above Wi-ju this is again split up by an island called Kulido; but higher up, at Sukuchin, which is thirteen miles above Wi-ju, it runs in a single stream.

Let us now take the land positions, more especially on the Russian side, commencing with the heights overlooking the Yalu below Antung, which is clearly marked even on small scale maps, and lies a little to the west of Wi-ju. It should be mentioned that the Yalu, after its confluence with the Ai, runs almost due south into Korea Bay. The capital Y, then, may still be conveniently retained as affording a fair general outline on which to dot down the main geographical features in question.

On the left hand of our Y, quite at the bottom of the supporting stroke, we may place the southern extremity of the Russian position. Here, on the heights of Antushan and Niang-ning-chin, are placed Russian batteries, and there is a strong force at Antung, a little higher up, about the middle of the supporting stroke of the Y. But the main Russian position is, as was foreshadowed on page 163, Kiu-lien-cheng, which lies on rising ground not far from the river, rather to the north-west of Wi-ju, and with a considerable command of the opposite bank. Between Kiu-lien-cheng and Wi-ju, as noted in Chapter XIII., there are two sandbanks, one the continuation of Cheun-song-do already mentioned, and another smaller one. Kiu-lien-cheng, or the "Fort of Nine Continuations," was for a time held by the Chinese in 1894, who doubtless trusted to its solid masonry battlements to deter the Japanese from any attempt at attack. But after the Japanese under Yamagata had crossed the Yalu, and scaled the walls of Kiu-lien-cheng, they found the place deserted. According to the accounts of all the correspondents, the Russian position along the Yalu, and especially at Kiu-lien-cheng, was anything but an inviting one, with its frowning hills rendered still more formidable by miles of entrenchments and numerous batteries. But the Japanese certainly possessed an important advantage in knowing every inch of the ground, and in having actually traversed it before with a view to an attack upon the same objective.


Yu chu san
AI RIVER
You shu kow
Railway in construction To Feng hwang-cheng
To Feng hwang cheng
Makau
Kiu-lien-cheng
Hu san
ANTUNG
Antushan
WIJU
Deep Channel
Main Japanese Artillery
YALU RIVER
Approximate Scale of English Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5

SKETCH MAP OF THE BATTLEFIELD OF KIU-LIEN CHENG.

It may save confusion in cases where the succeeding narrative is collated with others if it be mentioned here that Kiu-lien-cheng becomes in Japanese Kiu-ren-jo, and in Russian Turentcheng.

From Kiu-lien-cheng the main road runs, as we have seen in Chapter XIII., to Mukden through Feng-hwang-chen. Six or seven miles to the west of Kiu-lien-cheng lies Hohmutang, where the roads leading to Mukden and Kiu-lien-cheng respectively converge, and also one running southwards to Antung (which is also connected by a road along the river with Kiu-lien-cheng).

To the north of Kiu-lien-cheng, and along the right or western bank of the

Ai river, runs a long ridge at the south of which is Makau, and at the north Youshukow. At both these points the Russians have batteries, but this, the northern extremity, or the extreme left, whichever one prefers to call it, of the Russian position, is insecure. For the wedge-shaped piece of country lying in the fork of the capital Y is still higher. Right in the fork is Husan, or Tiger Hill, which is described as being to the Kiu-lien-cheng position exactly what Hlangwane Hill was to Colenso. Northward from Husan the high ground continues to Yu-chasan, which is nearly opposite Youshukow.

We have now come round by easy stages to the right "prong" of our Y, which, as we have noted above, is the stream of the Yalu proper, and on the left bank of which is Suku-chin, with Wi-ju thirteen miles to the south-west, and thence the main road running to An-ju and Ping-yang.

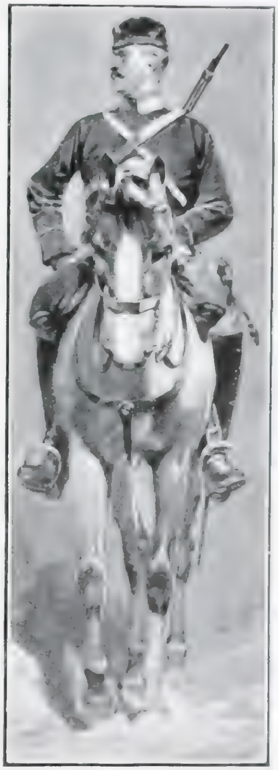
JAPANESE CAVALRYMAN.

The proceedings on both sides of the Yalu estuary prior to the Japanese attempts to force the passage are rather interesting, if obscure, and it is evident that some very fine work is done at this period in the way of reconnaissance. Both sides are particularly anxious to discover where the enemy's guns are located, and strenuous efforts are made with this end in view. On April 21st the Russians make a particularly bold feint, crossing the river in four junks from the shore near Antung, as if they intend to land at Wi-ju. Evidently the idea is to make the Japanese reveal their artillery positions, but General Kuroki is not to be caught napping in this fashion. Not a single gun speaks from the Japanese bank, but some Japanese infantry wait until the junks are well in the stream and then open a brisk fire, killing, it is said, sixteen of the enemy. In covering the retreat of this unfortunate party, the Russians find it necessary to use their guns, and thus reveal the whereabouts of some of their own batteries.

The Japanese operations during the last week of April are singularly secretive and misleading. Although, as has been noted, the ground on the Russian bank has a considerable command over that on the Japanese side, the latter has numerous small depressions in which movements can be made secure from Russian observation, and the Japs have even gone to the length of erecting screens along the roads to conceal the passage of troops and material.

In one important detail the Japanese succeed in fooling the Russians very cleverly. Opposite Wi-ju lies, as mentioned above, the long sandy island of Kintatao. On this the Japs make a great show of activity, collecting here a quantity of bridging material as if they intended to cross and deliver a direct frontal attack on Kiu-lien-cheng. But, before the actual passage is attempted, the greater part of this material is carefully removed behind the aforesaid screens to a point much further up the stream. The amount of ammunition which the Russians subsequently waste in shelling an imaginary enemy on Kintatao island is believed to be considerable.

On April 25th a Japanese naval detachment appears in the mouth of the Yalu. The detachment consists of gunboats, torpedo-boats, and a flotilla of steam launches under the command of Rear-Admiral Hosoya, and its arrival at this interesting juncture is pretty clear proof that a crossing is imminent. Warships of large size cannot ascend the shallow Yalu, but vessels of light draught, armed with quick-firing guns, may be extremely useful not only for purposes of actual offence, but also as a means of decoying away a considerable portion of the enemy's forces to the coast. As a matter of fact, it is believed that the majority of General Mishtchenko's Cossacks are kept usefully out of the way by this means, for in the course of the next few days there are several references to encounters between the Japanese steam launches and the Russian cavalry—a somewhat unusual occurrence in warfare. It seems that on arrival at the mouth of the river the naval detachment loses no time in getting to work, for some of the vessels are reported as having ascended the river on the 25th, and come under the ineffective fire from the enemy's artillery, presumably that posted at Niang-ning-chin, nearly opposite to Yongampho. Russian cavalry appear in the delta of the river, but retire when fired upon by the detachment. The following day the steam launches are again engaged, being fired upon by a body of 100 Cossacks. A Japanese torpedo-boat comes into action, and the Cossacks beat a retreat, leaving many wounded. On the whole, Russian experience in this connection does not favour the theory that a Cossack, who at the best of times is seldom a good marksman, is a suitable antagonist to pit against a bluejacket working a 6-pounder.


RUSSIAN DRAGOON

On April 26th commences the series of operations and actions which may be fitly described as the "Passage of the Yalu," and which for the purposes of this History will be distinguished from the resultant and culminating action of May 1st, sometimes called the "Battle of the Yalu," but quite as accurately, and more conveniently, designated the "Battle of Kinlien-cheng."

The enemy's front, as we have seen, occupies about 20 miles at the commencement of the operations. Against this General Kuroki launches three splendid divisions, the Imperial Guard, or Guards Division, commanded by General Baron Hasewaya, which originally occupies, roughly speaking, the centre of the Japanese position, resting on Wi-ju. The Japanese left opposes Antung, and is occupied by the 2nd Division, commanded by General Nishi. On the Japanese right is the 12th Division, commanded by General Inouye.

It now becomes necessary to allude to the special artillery preparations of the Japanese commander. General Kuroki understands the value of massed guns, and, accordingly, he has placed secretly in position to the south-west of Wi-ju a force of artillery immensely superior to any which the Russians can conceivably bring into action at any stage of the fight. This artillery is most cleverly masked, and, as we shall see, is not used until the fighting for the passage is far advanced. Besides at least 24 field-guns, there are in position a number of howitzers and, it is said, some of the 4·7 in. naval guns which we ourselves found so extremely serviceable in South Africa. The batteries are arranged so that a terribly destructive fire can be brought to bear either upon Kiu-lien-cheng itself or upon the Russian left flank.

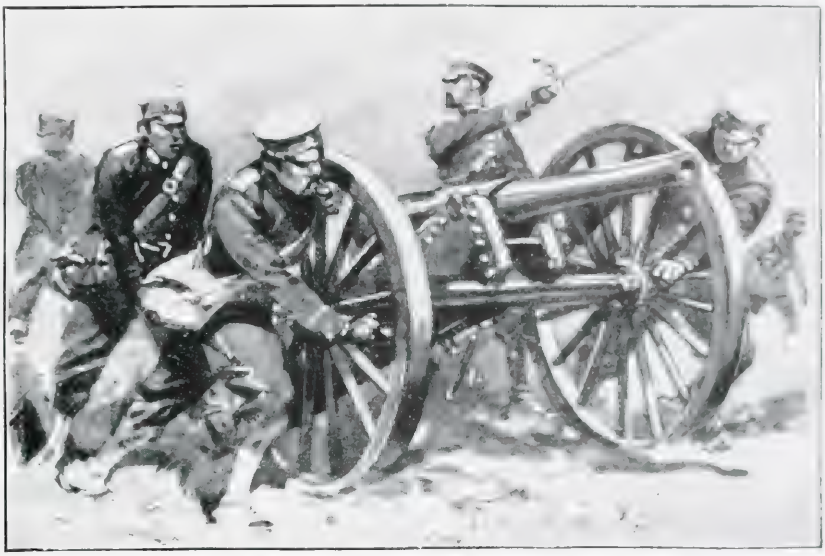
The first day (April 26th) is occupied in preparations for bridge-laying, and the work done consists in attacking and dispersing the enemy on the islets and in occupying the latter. This duty is entrusted to detachments of the Guards and the 2nd Division, which carry it out with conspicuous dash and thoroughness. The two divisions already commence to bear to the right with a view to an eventual turning movement, and so we find the 2nd Division occupying Kintatao Island, and the Guards crossing to Kulido (or, as it is called in some accounts, Kurito), higher up. The 2nd Division meets with no opposition and has no casualties, but the Guards evidently have some pretty stiff fighting, for they have twenty-five wounded, and the enemy are seen to carry many dead and wounded towards Kiu-lien-cheng. During the greater part of to-day the Russian artillery fires intermittently upon Wi-ju, but General Kuroki, not caring as yet to reveal the positions of his masked batteries, permits no reply.

April 27th and 28th are occupied chiefly in an attempt to gain a footing on Husan or Tiger Hill, which is held by a portion of the 22nd East Siberian Infantry. After the Guards have occupied Kulido Island in some strength, Husan is subjected to a searching fire by sharpshooters and the enemy evacuate, but subsequently, on the 29th, reoccupy this important position.

On the 27th, two gun-boats, two torpedo-boats, and two steamers of Admiral Hosoya's squadron ascend the Yalu and silence the Russian artillery at Antushan.

Thus at no serious risk of incurring heavy losses the Japanese are occupying the attention of the enemy along nearly twenty miles of front, and all the while are concealing the direction which they intend their main advance shall take. Meanwhile the Russians, of course, are not idle, and keep up a pretty steady fire upon Wi-ju, but without much effect. The reoccupation of Husan by the light infantry of the 10th and 12th Regiments of East Siberian under Staff Lieutenant-Colonel Lind appears to be carried out with great determination, notwithstanding the stubborn resistance offered by two battalions of the 4th Regiment of Guards infantry, with a few cavalry and mountain guns, also of the Guards. According to the Russian account this operation causes the enemy some loss, ten dead and twenty-eight wounded Japanese being left on the position.

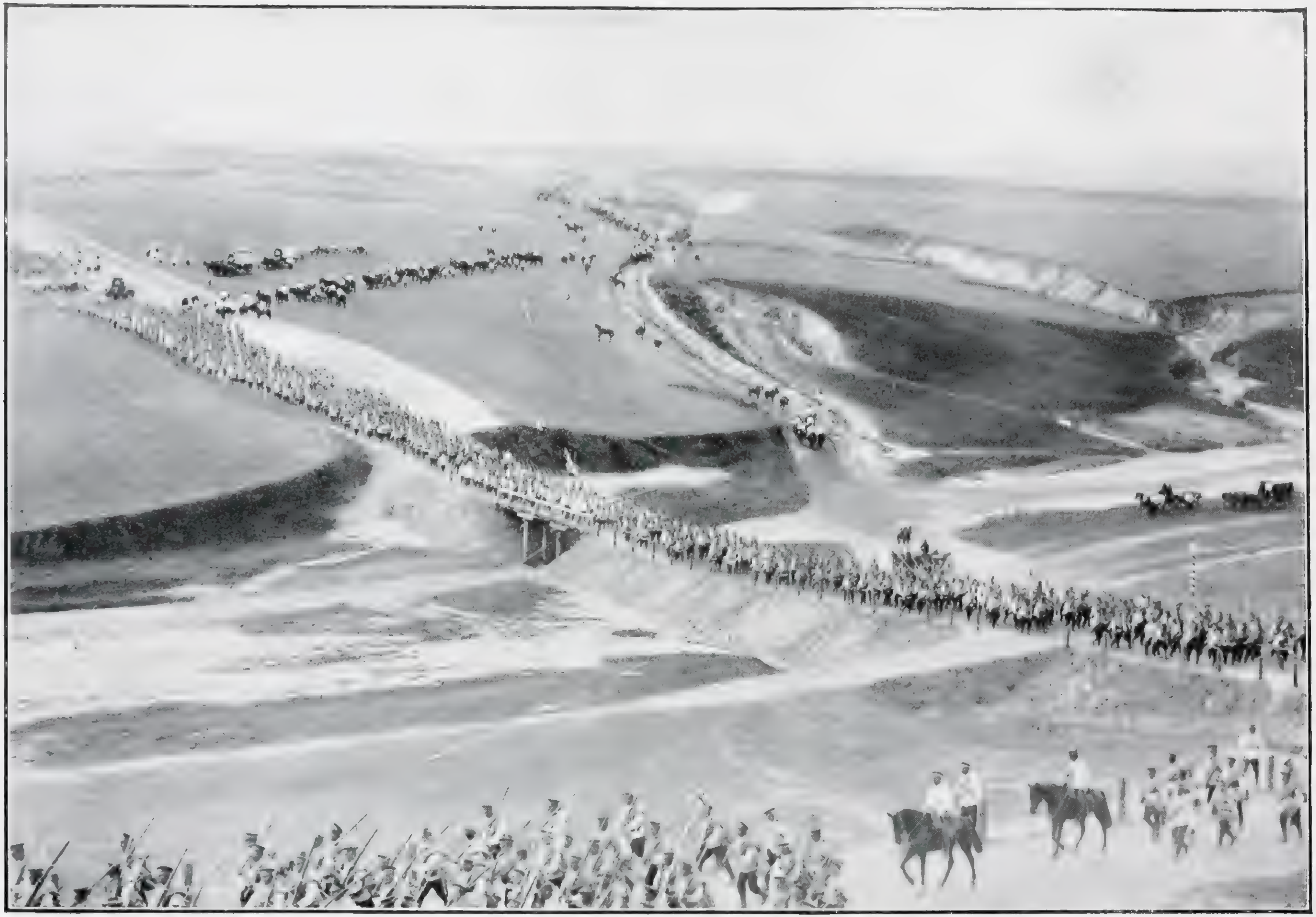
On April 29th the main bridging operations are commenced. A portion of the 12th Division crosses the Yalu at Sukuchin and disperses the enemy in the immediate neighbourhood, while the Japanese engineers labour incessantly to construct bridges adapted for the passage of a great force of all arms. The work is one not only of terrific labour but also of deadly peril. The water is so frightfully cold that men are repeatedly being overcome by numbness and drowned At some stages of the operation it is necessary to enter the water in order to lash the pontoons more securely, and Jap after Jap strips and plunges into the icy stream only to be overcome by cramp and perish. All the time the bridge is under construction the builders are under fire, for the shrapnel keep on bursting overhead from the batteries on the Russian left at Makau. While the 12th Division is busy at Sukuchin the Guards on Kulido are also preparing a bridge to Husan.



JAPANESE FIELD GUN.

The night of the 29th closes with a fierce artillery duel between some Russian guns which have been brought up on a sandy neck to the east of Husan and the Japanese right. The Russians have to-day evacuated their last island in the river, which has on it a village a mile long. Before leaving they apply petroleum to the wretched huts, and the village blazes all night, illuminating, as the *Daily Chronicle* correspondent picturesquely remarks, the dark-crested Manchurian hills for miles.

Early in the morning of the 30th the bridges at Sukuchin are completed, and the 12th Division begins crossing a little before eleven. At 10 a.m. the masked Japanese batteries have opened a tremendous fire on Kiu-lien-cheng, and this continues until 5 o'clock in the evening, the object clearly being to occupy the attention of the Russians and prevent them from interfering seriously with the crossing of the 12th Division. The result



A RUSSIAN COLUMN CROSSING A STREAM IN S.E. MANCHURIA of this timely intervention is that, although there is severe firing on all sides, the 12th Division only loses two men killed and twenty-five officers and men wounded.

The crossing of the 12th Division and its advance towards the Ai naturally causes a second Russian evacuation of Husan, and the withdrawal of the troops formerly holding it to the right bank of the Ai.

The 2nd Division follows the 12th across the bridges at Sukuchin, leaving, apparently, detachments on the islands in order to harass the enemy's centre The pressure on the Russian right is kept up by the naval flotilla, which advances to the neighbourhood of Antushan, and fights at close range with 400 of the enemy's cavalry and infantry.

Meanwhile the Guards have completed their bridge to Husan, notwithstanding heavy interruptions from the Russian artillery at Makau. In the evening they, too, cross, and thus by nightfall on Saturday, April 30th, General Kuroki has all his three divisions across the Yalu proper, and within striking distance of the enemy's left. To all intents and purposes the Russian flank has already been turned; the "Hlangwane Hill" of the position has been captured; the Russians even now are a little dubious as to the exact movement which will be made against them on the morrow; and the Japanese have an artillery superiority which is already manifest, but which will be still more conspicuous when the crucial stage of the forthcoming battle is reached.

STRETCHER BEARERS OF THE JAPANESE
MEDICAL STAFF CORPS.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BATTLE BEGUN—THE RUSSIAN POSITIONS—THE FORDING OF THE AI—TERRIBLE LOSSES—THE JAPANESE ASSAULT—A GALLANT DEFENCE—THE RUSSIANS ENVELOPED—RETREAT—THE LAST STAND—LOSSES—AN EPOCH - MAKING VICTORY.

IT is daybreak on the morning of Sunday, May 1st. The mists are rising from the river, and a glorious day is dawning, when, with a sudden roar, the Japanese artillery, in position near Wi-ju, burst into terrific action. The recesses of the hills opposite are searched with shrapnel, and bursting shells fall thick and fast into the Russian lines. Artillery which has been posted by the Japanese on the islands in the river joins in the cannonade, to which the Russian reply is weak and fitful. The Russian artillery on the hill north-west of Youshukow, which is a special menace to the infantry attack, is silenced, and by 7 o'clock all is ready for the tremendous development which is to show once, and perhaps for all, whether the Japanese Army can hold its own with that of the Great White Tsar.

Meanwhile, in the bright morning light, the three divisions of the Japanese First Army have been revealed on the left flank of the Russian position. To the Japanese right is still General Inouye with the 12th Division; the centre is still, and will continue to be, occupied by the Guards Division; while the 2nd Division, although probably at first in rear of the Guards, will shortly resume its old place on the left. Throughout the vicissitudes of this tremendous conflict, Japanese tactics are as consistent as is Japanese strategy, and, indeed, as a trained observer remarks, the whole battle is a model of fine leadership.

The Russians endeavour to adapt themselves to some extent to the circumstances of the coming attack, but it is doubtful whether even now they realise fully the gravity of the situation. General Kashtalinski, like the able soldier that he is, has grasped the fact that the left flank of the original position, for which he is specially responsible, has been turned, but last night he received orders from General Sassulitch to hold his ground. Accordingly he remains with three battalions of the 22nd East Siberian Regiment watching the fords of the Ai river; the 12th Rifle Regiment is on the hills behind, supported by a couple of batteries and some machine guns.

The combatants are now separated by the Ai river, and in grim silence the Russians in their trenches await the oncoming of the attacking Jap infantry. It is not difficult to imagine the concentrated yearning to come to blows which animates almost more particularly the defenders in this great engagement. For weeks succeeding an inglorious withdrawal from Korea they have watched the enemy collecting his strength for the delivery of a great blow, and now has come the supreme moment when the weary waiting and privation of this exhausting time is to come swiftly and tragically to an end. What wonder if the Russian infantryman grips his rifle with fierce exultation, and the pride of the Russian gunner in his weapon is tinged with the lust of blood, as each feels the moments slipping away which separate him from actual collision with a well-hated foe.

For the rest the situation, so soon and so terribly to be resolved into one altogether fresh and even more tremendous in its consequences, is one of awful solemnity. Only a little strip of sand and water separate great and representative forces of the West and the Far East, and, though the result of contact cannot be decisive, the issue must be dreadfully significant, not only for Russia but, perhaps, for the whole civilised world. A dozen complications of almost appalling moment hang on the eventual success of Russia and Japan in this great war, and, while this is but a first serious land engagement, possibly of many, the utter failure of one or other side to fulfil its expectations cannot but have a vitally serious bearing upon the future of the campaign. To the student with a touch of sentiment in his composition an added tinge of gravity is lent to the scene which unfolds itself this fine Sunday morning by the fact that now, for the first time, Japan plays the part not only of attacker, but of an actual invader. It is true that Manchuria is in reality Chinese, but for many months past it has been recognised by all the world as temporarily in effective Russian occupation, and, when last night the three Japanese divisions crossed the Yalu at Husan and Sukuchin, they invaded, to all political intents and purposes, Russian territory as surely as they threw down the gauntlet to Russia by sea by their attack on Port Arthur now nearly three months ago.

While we are indulging in these grave and really edifying reflections the " ball " —to use an old-fashioned military description not without a certain quaint significance—which has been opened by the Japanese artillery, commences in deadly earnest. Since 5 o'clock the 12th Japanese Division has been deploying on a four mile front, a movement which is rendered very much easier than it might otherwise have proved by the absence of a pushful force of Russian cavalry. Unhampered by any of those desperate charges which have sometimes told heavily on deploying infantry, the 12th Division " sorts itself out," and advances boldly to the fords of the Ai, covered by its own field artillery and by the flanking fire of the long range guns at Wi-ju.

Had the advance been taking place over solid ground the Division would have the appearance of long thin wavy lines presenting a comparatively unsubstantial mark to the defenders' fire. But owing, it is suggested, to the necessity for closing in upon the practicable fords, the Division, or a considerable portion of it, reaches the river bank in column. Kashtalinski's infantry are not slow to take advantage of this inviting solidity. The Japanese come swinging on with a thin protecting fringe of skirmishers, when suddenly from the Russian trenches, in which until now grim silence has been preserved, there bursts a perfect hurricane of musketry fire. The skirmishers drop by scores, the column reels, and the Japanese casualties at this point come to be numbered in hundreds. Still they press on across the stream, the men frantic to get at the enemy, the more thoughtful of the leaders anxious to gain temporary shelter in the " dead angle " at the base of the hills ahead. As the companies gain the opposite bank rapid extension takes place, and the smallest hillock of sand is used as a screen from which to pour shot after shot into the Russian position. "Never," says Mr. Donohoe of the *Daily Chronicle*, who watched the action from an eminence in rear of the Guards Reserves, "even in South Africa, have I seen troops so unprotected exposed to so murderous a fire."

Although in trenches and on the defensive the Russians are in a hardly less enviable position. General Kashtalinski reckons that his position is being cannonaded by thirty-six field guns, in addition to the enemy's position artillery, and it is evident that the defenders are being frightfully shaken. At hundreds of points the shrapnel screaming overhead has hailed down bullets into the trenches, and moving stories are told of the gallantry displayed by the grand Siberian Infantry in these depressing circumstances.

While the advance of the Japanese 12th Division is being kept in check as far as possible by two battalions of the 22nd Siberian Infantry, the 12th Siberian Rifle Regiment, which, as noted above, has been posted on the hill in the rear, now comes forward, covered by the fire of the scanty field artillery and machine guns at General Kashtalinski's disposal, and assists to man the trenches.

While the 12th Japanese Division has thus been delivering a fairly direct, if very costly, attack upon its objective, the remainder of the Japanese First Army has been playing its allotted part with no less resolution and success. The Guards Division has crossed to the left of the 12th, and is advancing in the direction of Hohmutang, where, as explained in the preceding chapter, four roads converge, and through which the main route runs to Feng-hwang-chen and Mukden. Here lay the original centre of the Russian position held by the 12th Siberian Rifles with the 11th Regiment in reserve.

The 2nd Japanese Division crosses in rear of the Guards and slips down the river side towards Antung, where it is believed there is still a considerable force of the enemy. Here at the commencement of the fighting were the 9th and 10th Regiments of East Siberian Infantry, with two batteries constituting the original Russian right.

It is now noon, and the position is as follows. The Japanese attack extends from beyond Youshukow right away to Antung, and is being pressed with irresistible force and tenacity, notwithstanding the terrible losses suffered by the 12th Division at the Ai fords. The 12th Division itself has swarmed up the steep rocky hillsides in front of it like ants, and already on one of the topmost Russian parapets a Japanese soldier has unfurled the Japanese flag, and the Japanese spectators on the walls of An-ju have welcomed the glorious sight with shouts of "Banzai!" The Russian positions on Youshukow and Makau have been stormed, and a battalion of the 22nd East Siberian Infantry, which was holding Kashtalinski's extreme left, completely routed.

Lower down, the Guards and the 2nd Division are driving the original Russian right and centre on to its left, while still further south the naval flotilla is at work, having started up the river at half-past nine, and bombarded Antushan and other villages along the bank. Never was pressure on a long and difficult position more skilfully and systematically exercised, and it is unquestionably to this policy of giving the defenders no rest, and constantly confusing them by fresh attacks in unexpected places, that the success of this elaborate operation is largely due. But no mere tactical dexterity could have produced such results

THE BATTLEFIELD AS SEEN FROM THE RANGE OF HILLS TERMINATING AT TIGER HILL.

[illegible]

as are already being gained by the Japanese, without the exhibition of extraordinary courage and persistence. The frowning hills—heights some of them are—are splendidly held, at any rate during the earlier phases of the fighting, and it is only the sublime ardour of the Japs, their reckless indifference to death, and the fine leadership of their officers, which save them from being hurled back at a dozen points in dangerous confusion.

The 2nd Division, in their advance on the left, meet with a painful experience. They have mounted a hill commanding the Russian line of retreat, when suddenly two shells from their own artillery drop among them, falling short, and burst. When the smoke lifts, twenty-seven dead bodies mark the occurrence of one of those unhappy accidents which will happen even in the best-regulated battles. But the Japs, though momentarily disconcerted, swiftly rally and go forward once more. Wherever there are occupied trenches ahead of them they dash at these with magnificent *élan*, and, where there is no immediate objective, still they move on, knowing that the tremendous pressure they are exercising is gradually squeezing the Russians into a contracted space, the prelude to a final stand or a general retreat.

The condition of the Russians is becoming more and more critical. Already the 12th Rifle Regiment has been taken from the old centre to strengthen General Kashtalinski's position to the left of Kiu-lien-cheng, and the General, who throughout the action appears to receive little consideration from his superior, General Sassulitch, is beginning to be sorely pressed. Towards noon he ascertains that, as mentioned above, the battalion of the 22nd Regiment on his extreme left has been routed by the right of the oncoming 12th Japanese Division, and that his left flank is thus being turned.

At 1 o'clock in the afternoon General Kashtalinski at last receives a reinforcement in the shape of two battalions of the 11th Regiment, and a battery commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Mouravsky. These have been sent by General Sassulitch with an intimation that in due course the 9th and 10th Regiments will follow from the neighbourhood of Antung, and that, meanwhile, Kashtalinski must continue to hold his ground.

The manifest obstacle to the accomplishment of this heroic task is the fact that a Japanese enveloping movement has now commenced, all three divisions closing in gradually on the Russian position near Kiu-lien-cheng.

Yet Kashtalinski faces the situation manfully, and does the best possible with the scanty troops at his disposal. Seeing that the advanced position occupied by the 12th and 22nd Regiments is no longer tenable, he orders the 11th Regiment, which has come to his assistance, to occupy a commanding position in the rear from which they can fire on the enemy from two sides. He then, under cover of this fire, withdraws the 12th and 22nd Regiments, and the batteries and quick-firing guns which are also in his first position.

The operation is only carried out with extreme difficulty. The Japanese keep pressing forward, and Colonel Mouravsky's battery, not being able to take up a satisfactory position, is severely handled and loses its commander. The 12th Regiment is intercepted by the Japanese and has to cut its way through. A company with quick-firing guns loses half its men and all its horses, and one of the batteries, withdrawn from the first position, finds it cannot ascend the steep slopes with only half its horses, and so returns to its original place and fights to the bitter end.

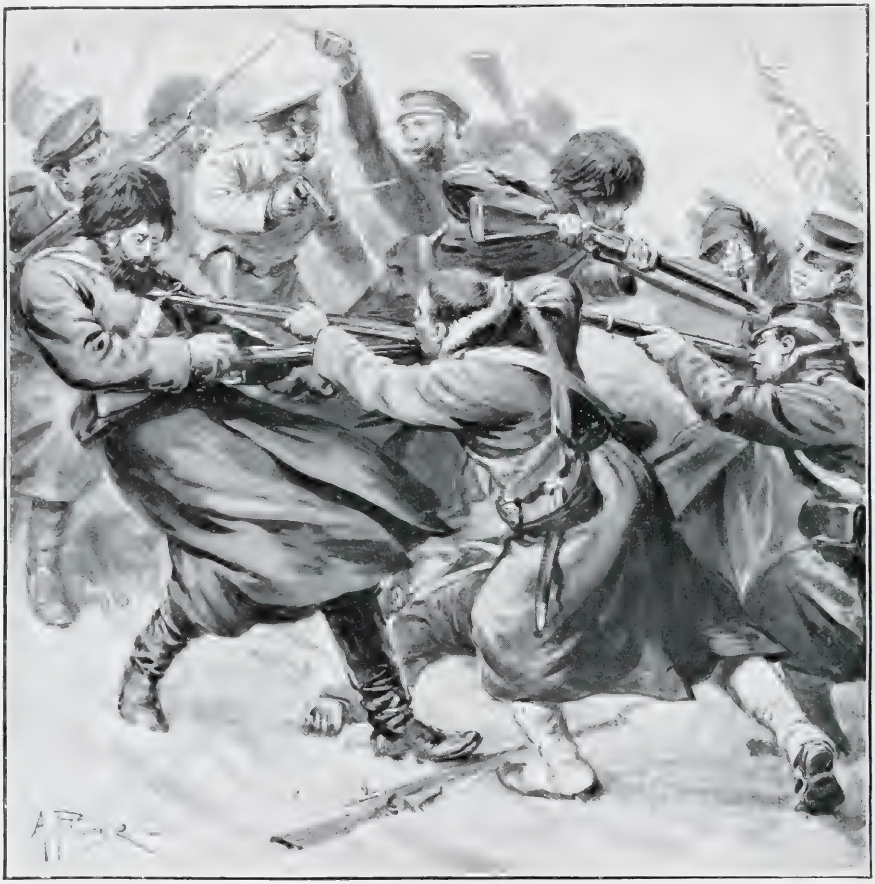
But the palm for dogged bravery must be given to the 11th and 12th Regiments, which hold out against overwhelming numbers until 3 o'clock, when the arrival of the 10th Regiment from Antung enables a general withdrawal to be carried out. In the list of casualties furnished by General Sassulitch the losses of the 11th Regiment are returned at over 200 killed and over 300 wounded, while the 12th Regiment had nearly 300 killed and some 400 wounded.

The Russian retreat is, of course, in the direction of Feng-hwang-chen, and, although both General Sassulitch and General Kashtalinski speak warmly of the manner in which the *morale* of the troops is maintained, there is reason to believe that much disorderliness prevails. In the position recently occupied several guns have been abandoned, but there is ample excuse for this in the fact that so many of the horses have been killed, and that the attack has been pressed home with such extraordinary vigour by an overwhelming enemy. Apart from this, however, there is evidence that the flight was a somewhat precipitate one, even Russian officers who were taken prisoners admitting that the only bodies which retreated in order were five or six infantry battalions and two artillery companies.

According to Chinese reports a painful incident of the retreat takes place near Feng-hwang-chen. Some 2,000 infantry posted on a hill near the latter place mistake 300 comrades who have been limping along sadly from Kiu-lien-cheng for the enemy. They open fire upon the advancing body, and over 100 are killed and wounded before the ghastly mistake is discovered.

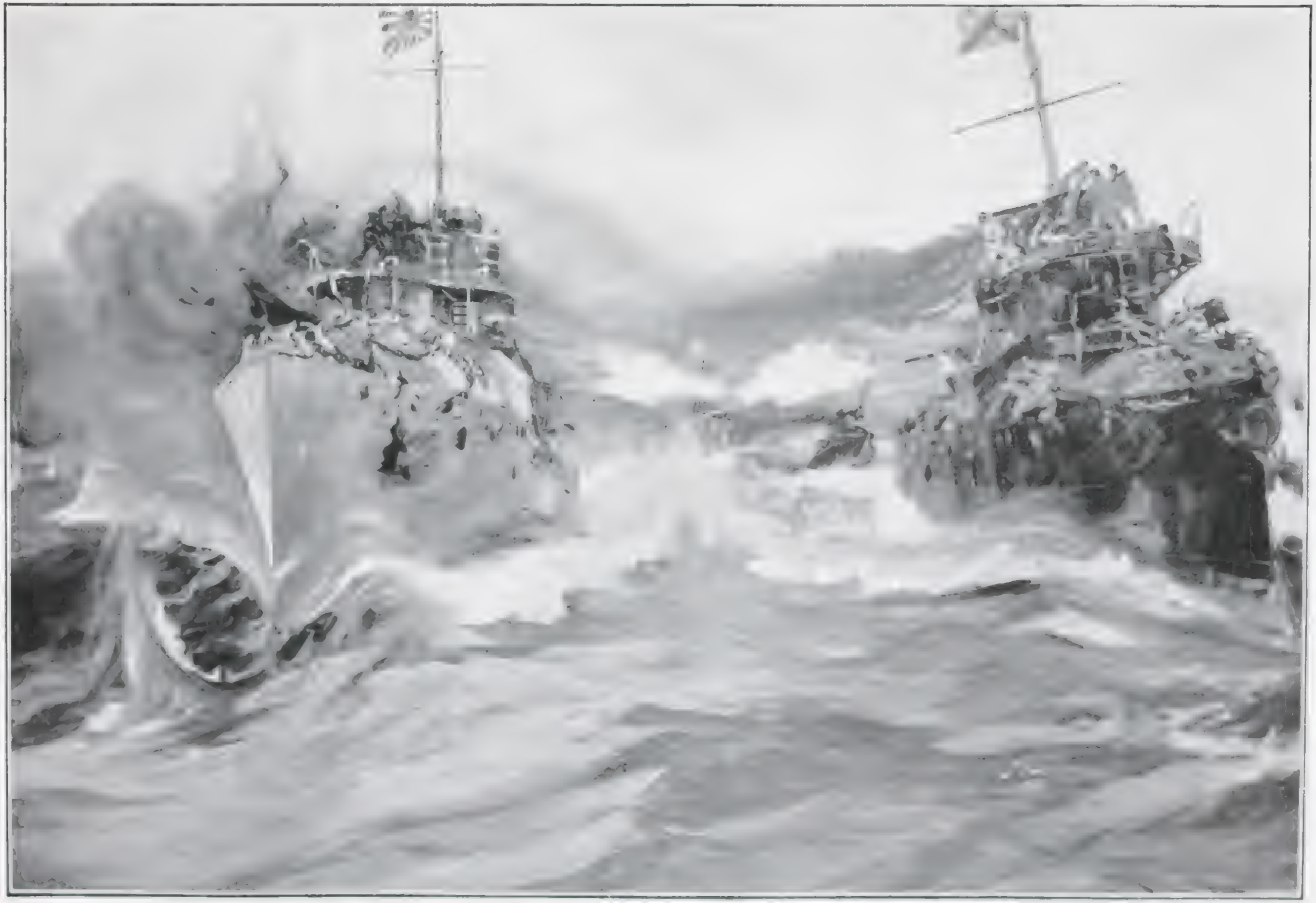
RUSSIAN FIELD GUN.

At Hohmutang, about 7 o'clock in the evening, a final Russian stand is made, and of this a more detailed account is given by the *Times* correspondent in a despatch from Antung than is at first forthcoming with regard to any other stage of the engagement. It appears that no sooner was the capture of the position at Kiu-lien-cheng assured than the Japanese brought up the reserves of two of the attacking Divisions, and sent them after the retreating Russians in the hope of cutting off the enemy's retreat. These two bodies, accompanied by mountain guns, hurried right and left respectively of the main road, the reserve of the remaining division following more leisurely along the road itself.



AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

"Fearful of losing the fray, the flanking bodies in their haste outstripped their guns, and, after advancing parallel to the road until abreast of the retiring enemy, suddenly closed in, completely surprising the Russians, who were forced to take up a defensive position at Hohmutang, six miles from Kiu-lien-cheng.



A FIGHT BETWEEN DESTROYERS

"The body pursuing in the rear quickened its movements, and all three simultaneously engaged the Russians. A desperate fight ensued, the Russians at short range using their guns with deadly effect. The Japanese greatly outnumbered their opponents and inflicted terrible losses with their rifle fire. Without guns the Japanese might well have retired and waited for support, but the men, jealous of the laurels earned by their comrades earlier in the day, were wild to get at the enemy. With loud cheers all three bodies with bayonets fixed charged the Russian position in almost solid masses. Such impetuosity, backed by superior numbers, could not be withstood, and the Russians hoisted the white flag in token of surrender.

"With the Russians were 20 guns, all of which fell into the hands of the Japanese; 20 officers were taken prisoners, and 400 men, more than half of these being wounded. The Japanese estimated their own casualties in this short fight at 300. The Russians must have lost treble that number."

According to the Japanese official accounts there were 5 Japanese officers and 160 men killed in the battle, and 29 officers and 666 men wounded; total 860. The heaviest loss was incurred by the 2nd Division, which had 1 officer and 84 men killed, and 318 wounded.

Of Russian dead bodies the Japs actually buried 1,362, and they received nearly 500 wounded into their hospitals. In addition to the wounded, 20 officers and 138 men were taken prisoners, and, as trophies of the fight, 28 guns remained in the hands of the victors. It must be appreciatively recorded that the Russian dead were buried with military honours, that the wounded were treated with extreme tenderness, and that their swords were returned to the Russian officers on the latter giving their *parole*.

The total losses of the Russians must have been considerably in excess of the above figures. It is said that some 700 wounded were carried into Feng-hwang-chen, and altogether the casualties may well have numbered nearly 3,000.

On the night of May 1st the Japanese bivouacked in and round Kiu-lien-cheng. It is a painful circumstance that during the night bands of Chinese should have wandered over the battlefield stripping the dead of their clothes and accoutrements, but the Japanese, worn out by their hard day's fighting, are hardly to be blamed for not foreseeing and preventing this shameful outrage. On learning next morning that it had occurred they were greatly incensed, and, after offering rewards for the apprehension of the guilty Chinese, established a system of patrols, which should effectually prevent the recurrence of such abominable practices.

So ends the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng, and, before we proceed to follow the operations which form a sequel to it, it seems desirable to examine briefly from various standpoints the actual course of this remarkable engagement.

The first point that presents itself is the Russian attempt to minimise the importance of the battle by representing it merely as the result of a wish to lure the Japanese on into Manchurian territory. To this view the cold logic of subsequent events may oppose sufficient objection, but in any case it is obvious that the military commander who seeks to lure on an enemy at the cost of two or three thousand casualties and nearly thirty guns is a strategist of very doubtful order.

The simple fact of the case seems to

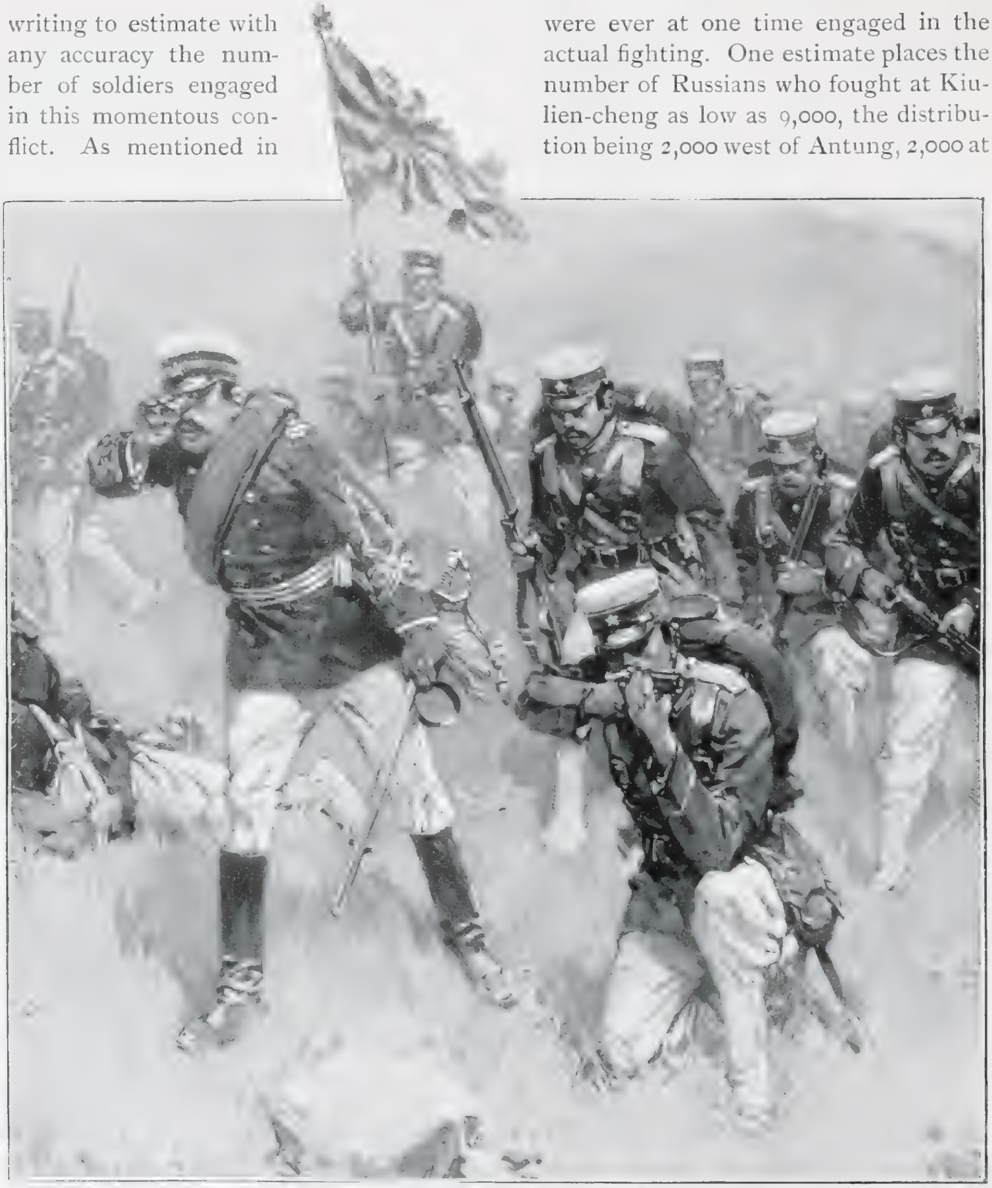
be that, originally, the intention was to lure the Japanese on, and that, with this end in view, the plan was not to fight any serious action on the Yalu, but to withdraw skilfully, and either meet the enemy at the Motien-ling Pass, or await him at Liao-yang. This plan was, however, changed, and at the last moment General Sassulitch, an Army Corps Commander, was placed in charge of the position, and every effort made to strengthen it. While the Russian operations were yet in a state of transition the Japanese attacked, and General Sassulitch, very possibly against the wishes of General Kuropatkin, fought a defensive action against an immensely superior enemy, and neither supported his subordinate, General Kashtalinski, properly, nor made adequate arrangements whereby an orderly retirement could be effected.

There is no question that the Russians were sadly hampered, and a good deal confused, by the Japanese plan of attack. Until the latter was fully developed, they seemed to anticipate that an attempt would still be made to cross the Yalu opposite Wi-ju, and not until it was too late to save the situation did they change front in order to meet the main attack from the Ai river. A more stubborn retention of Tiger Hill, a strong opposition to the crossing at Sukuchin, and a clearer appreciation of the value of the positions at Makau and Youshukow, might have produced different results; but it is hardly fair to the Russian Army to speak too confidently on these points. For one thing, they were entirely outclassed in the matter of artillery, and there is no doubt that the Japanese naval flotilla was of the greatest use to the attack by keeping Cossacks and infantry occupied on what was first the Russian right, and afterwards the Russian rear, which might have been employed to much better purpose on the other side of Kiuliencheng.

Of the Japanese strategy and tactics throughout it is impossible to speak in terms of exaggerated admiration. In all the preparations for the actual fighting General Kuroki displayed a master mind, and although it is possible that the plan of the attack in outline had been arranged at Tokio, there must have been many details for the conception as well as the execution of which the military genius of the Commander of Japan's First Army was solely responsible. To the professional critic two questionable points present themselves; the huddling of the 12th Division at the Ai ford, and the passage of the 2nd Division along the bank of the river in order to "sweep up" the Russians supposed to be in force at Antung. The former has already been partially explained by the possible necessity for closing in at the fords, but the process involved heavy loss, and it may be doubted whether the Japanese anticipated quite such a warm reception as they received at this point from Kashtalinski's entrenched infantry and machine guns.

The enveloping movement, in furtherance of which the 2nd Division proceeded towards Antung, was finely conceived, and the end possibly justified the means. But it is an interesting speculation whether still better and more decisive results could not have been attained by prolonging the line of envelopment to the right, instead of to the left, thus making a much wider flanking movement without wasting so many troops in frontal attacks. Had the Russian left been completely enveloped probably the whole of the defence would have been disorganised and anything approaching a retirement rendered practically impossible.

It is extremely difficult at the time of writing to estimate with any accuracy the number of soldiers engaged in this momentous conflict. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, it was estimated by the Japanese that during the last week in April there were 30,000 Russian troops on the Yalu, but it is doubtful whether more than two-thirds of these were ever at one time engaged in the actual fighting. One estimate places the number of Russians who fought at Kiu-lien-cheng as low as 9,000, the distribution being 2,000 west of Antung, 2,000 at Antung, and 5,000 at Kiu-lien-cheng. On the other hand, five distinct regiments of infantry are mentioned in the Russian despatches, in addition to artillery, and it is hardly conceivable that these would



JAPANESE INFANTRY REINFORCING THE FIRING LINE.

have in the field less than, on an average, 2,500 or 3,000 men apiece.

Whatever the Russian force may have been, it, or a part of it, fought a very gallant fight against tremendous odds, numerical and otherwise. The Japanese Division ordinarily contains some 15,000 men, and in war it sometimes is swollen by the addition of a reserve brigade. General Kuroki must therefore have had 45,000 men, and may have had 60,000 or even more under his orders on this eventful Sunday.

But of far greater importance than considerations of strategy, tactics, or arithmetic in this connection is, of course, the moral effect of Japan's victory over a Russian force strongly posted and deliberately accepting battle. In future there can be no question of reckoning soldiers of the Mikado as inferior to those of the Tsar. They meet on even terms, even if the Japanese have not already secured a moral predominance which may stand them in good stead. Had they merely turned the Russians out by weight of numbers the effect upon the minds of dispassionate observers would have been considerable. But that they should have inflicted upon the enemy such a serious, such a shattering defeat is one of those things which no amount of Russian optimism or feigned indifference will explain away. Sunday, May 1st, 1904, the day when Kuroki beat the Russians on the Yalu, is something far more than a glorious date for the Army of Japan. It marks the opening of the eyes of Europe to an altogether fresh view of the struggle in the Far East, and there are those who, looking ahead, may even feel a premonition that here, perhaps, is dimly indicated a great future crisis in the whole world's history.

GENERAL SASSULITCH

CHAPTER XX.

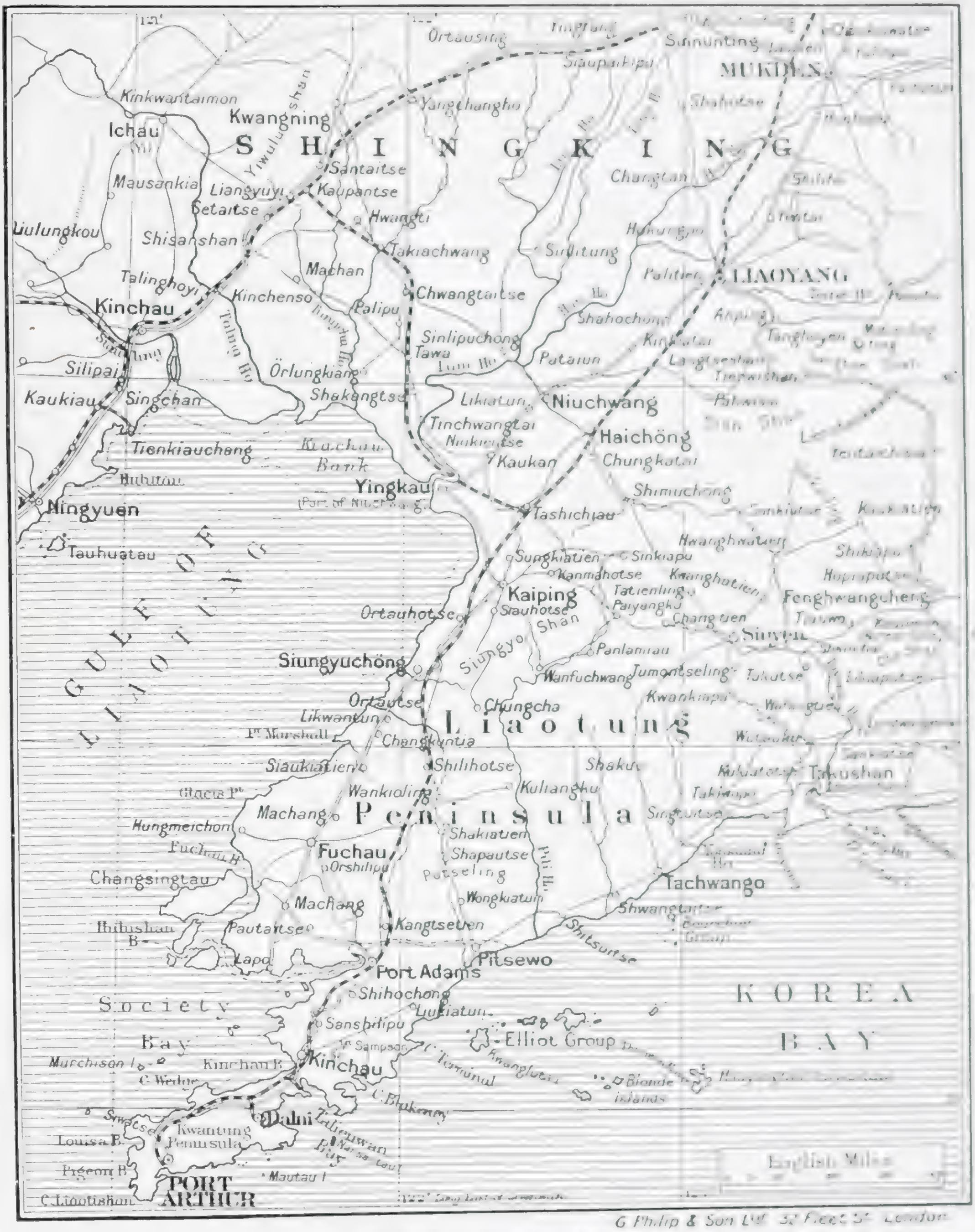
AFTER THE BATTLE—THE PROBLEM OF PURSUIT—SCENES ON THE BATTLEFIELD—THE ADVANCE—A DETACHED BRIGADE—A DIFFICULT COUNTRY—CAPTURE OF FENG-HWANG-CHENG—A LENGTHY HALT.

THE situation after the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng seems at first sight, no doubt, extremely simple. One army in retreat, another flushed with victory and with its mobility unimpaired—what could be more natural than that the latter should follow swiftly on the heels of the former, and endeavour to deal it further blows while it is still "on the trot"? Such things are possible, such things have happened in warfare before. Why should they not happen now, and the Japanese crown their brilliant success on the Yalu by added, and almost equally profitable, engagements with a partially demoralised enemy?

But fighting is never, perhaps, a more complicated business than it sometimes is on the morrow of a big fight. A commander may be yearning to follow up an advantage to the very uttermost, may know that, if he does not do so, he will be classed with dozens of leaders who have won but poor names in history because they have not planted blow upon blow, and have been content with single and indecisive triumphs. But he may be held back by considerations of first-class importance, considerations which may not dawn upon his home critics, or even upon his immediate subordinates, for months, and may even then be imperfectly understood. On the whole, it may be said that there are few more doubtful positions, in nine cases out of ten, than that of a general who, having won a considerable victory, can neither stay where he is, nor feel that by a vigorous and brief pursuit he can convert his success into a decisive triumph.

That is the position of General Kuroki, commanding the First Army of Japan, after the passage of the Yalu and the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng. He has inflicted upon the enemy a defeat of extraordinary significance, one from the moral effects of which, at any rate, they will not recover perhaps for years. But there is, of course, no finality about an engagement with a mere fraction of the enemy's forces, and to remain on the ground won would be merely to throw into the fire such advantage as has already been gained. On the other hand, General Kuroki knows perfectly well that any pursuit of the retreating Russians must be a very restricted performance, in the execution of which he may conceivably, through no fault of his own, lose some of the credit he has acquired by battle tactics of a very high order.

Let us first take a glance at the topographical situation in which the Japanese commander finds himself. He is now on the direct road to Liao-yang, which lies about 120 miles, as the crow flies, almost due north-west from Kiu-lien-cheng. At Liao-yang is General Kuropatkin with probably not less than 80,000 men under his direct control. To the north of Liao-yang runs the railway to Mukden, where Admiral Alexeieff has his


Ortausing
Sinmunting
MUKDEN
Kinkwantaimon
Kwangning
Ichau
Yangchangho
Shahotse
SHINGKING
Yiwulushan
Santaitse
Kaupantse
Mausankia
Liangyuyi
Setaitse
Changtan
Hwangti
Liulungkou
Shisanshan
Takiachwang
Sinlitung
Machan
LIAOYANG
Talinghoyi
Kinchenso
Chwangtaitse
Kinchau
Palipu
Shahochong
Sinlipuchong
Tawa
Pataiun
Silipai
Örlungkiang
Kinkiatai
Singchan
Kaukiau
Shakangtse
Likiatun
Niuchwang
Tinchwangtai
Niukiatse
Haichöng
Tienkiauchang
Kinchau Bank
Kaukan
Chungkatai
Yingkau
(Port of Niuchwang)
Ningyuen
Shimuchöng
Tashichiau
Tauhuatau
Sunghiatien
Sinkiapu
Kanmahotse
Kaiping
Siauhotse
Tatienling
Paiyanghu
Fenghwangcheng
Ortauhotse
Changtien
Siuyen
Panlamiau
GULF OF LIAOTUNG
Siungyuchöng
Wanfuchwang
Jumontseling
Tukutse
Kwankiapu
Ortautse
Chungcha
Likwantun
Pt Marshall
Changkuntia
Liaotung
Siaukiatien
Shilihotse
Shaku
Takushan
Glacis Pt
Wankialing
Kuliangku
Machang
Peninsula
Hungmeichon
Shakiatien
Singeutse
Fuchau
Fuchau H.
Shapautse
Orshilipu
Changsingtau
Potseling
Tachwango
Machang
Wongkiatun
Shwangtaitse
Hulushan B.
Pautaitse
Kangtseuen
Shitsuitse
Lapo
Pitsewo
Port Adams
Society Bay
Shihochong
KOREA BAY
Liukiatun
Sanshilipu
Elliot Group
Pt Sampson
Murchison I.
Kinchau B.
Kinchau
Terminal
Blonde Islands
C. Wedge
C. Blake
Swatse
Kwantung Peninsula
Dalni
Talienwan Bay
Louisa B.
Pigeon B.
Mautau I.
PORT ARTHUR
C. Liautishan
English Miles

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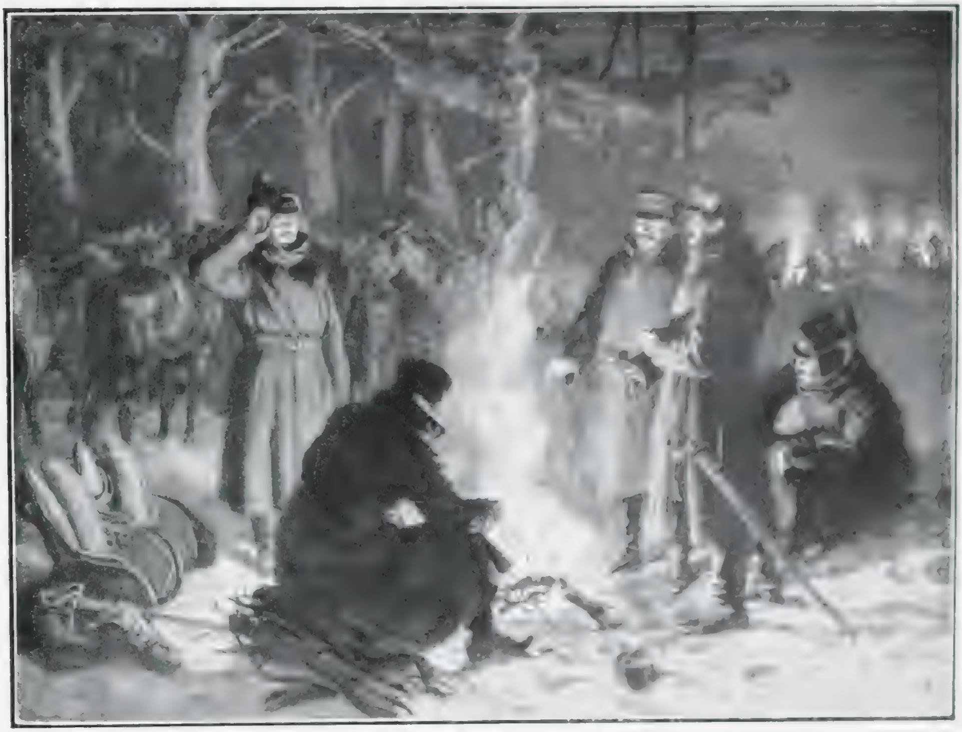
MAP OF THE LIAOTUNG PENINSULA

a, Road from Kinchau [illegible] (see map, p. 171) viceregal headquarters, and to the north of Mukden again, also connected with it by railway, is Harbin. Westward from Harbin stretches the Siberian line to St. Petersburg. At the very outset, then, Kuroki is face to face with the tremendous fact that in turning the Russians out of Kiu-lien-cheng he has merely passed the fringe of an immense sea of warlike possibilities, and that extraordinary caution is necessary in making henceforth every forward step. Incidentally the Japanese have had a taste of Russian fighting quality in the gallant stand made by the 11th and 12th Regiments, and, though it has been found that the entrenchments at Kiu-lien-cheng were wretchedly constructed, it is admitted that the positions were well chosen. With an enemy capable of stubborn and skilful resistance there are points of the country to be covered in the coming advance which even the leader of such a fine and enthusiastic army as Kuroki's may well view with some misgiving.

Again, in such a movement as is now about to be undertaken, the Japanese are seriously handicapped by the poor quality of their horseflesh. We have seen what care was taken during the passage of the Yalu to keep the Cossacks drawn away from the main fighting area, and it may be not unfairly surmised that this would not have been done had the mounts of the Japanese cavalry enabled them to meet their opponents in this respect on even terms. When the 12th Division was landed at Chemulpo it was particularly noted by the *Times* Correspondent that the cavalry and transport horses were not good enough to do the work expected of them. They came from Southern Japan, and had none of the well-known stamina and qualities of the hardy Mongolian ponies, nor were they to be compared with the superior horses from the North of Japan. Here we have another serious impediment to pursuit on the orthodox lines, as, for example, when Ziethen's dragoons thundered after the broken French on the night of Waterloo.

But by far the most serious consideration which General Kuroki has to take into account at this interesting and deeply important juncture is the fact that he is only to a very limited extent his own master. He is something very much more, of course, than a mere pawn in the game, but, none the less, he has little controlling influence except as regards the, comparatively speaking, minor movements of his own three divisions. In Tokio there is a little council of big-brained men to whom the Army which has just carried the Russian position at Kiu-lien-cheng by assault is but one of at least three armies. All the latter may soon be in motion, and their combined operations again must be largely dependent upon the success of the Fleet. The magnitude of the War in the Far East begins to be realised when once it becomes necessary to " think in armies," instead of merely reckoning by divisions and brigades. Further, the most impatient of us will be inclined to admit that even generals who do not do exactly what we, with a mere map before us, think they ought to with 50,000 or 60,000 troops, may be pardoned for obeying the behests of those who may soon have 200,000 soldiers, besides a powerful Navy, disposed on their great war-game area.

Having thus attempted to define the restrictions which hamper Kuroki at the close of the fighting before Kiu-lien-cheng, let us turn to what he can do,



BIVOUAC OF JAPANESE CAVALRY.

and does do, with vigour and success. About forty miles, as the crow flies, from Kiu-lien-cheng lies Feng-hwang-cheng, which, as noted in Chapter XIII., has been used by the Russians as a sort of advanced base for the Yalu operations. On this the Russians retreated after their last stand at Hohmutang, and, as far as this, it is permissible to General Kuroki to pursue as smartly as he can. Beyond Feng-hwang-cheng a new situation will present itself, with which we shall deal in due course.

But before we leave the battlefield of Kiu-lien-cheng let us attempt to conjure up a scene which must have a singular, if somewhat lurid, interest for the imaginative reader. It is a moonlit night, and the wakeful Japanese, of whom there are probably few after such a hard day's fighting, should be able from the heights this side of the river to see something at least of the ground over which the day's struggle took place. The Yalu almost laps the feet of Kiu-lien-cheng village, and its confluence with the Ai should be dimly discernible. Well assured may we be that those Ai fords will remain photographed on the minds of every Jap soldier who a few hours ago faced the withering hail of Russian bullets at that point, and who now looks down on the sandy banks bathed in moonlight that is wholly peaceful. There are no dead bodies now in evidence at this fateful spot. Burial parties have been busily at work, and those who perished in that costly passage are now lying decently interred, and not without touching memorial to their reckless bravery. "Last night after the battle," writes Mr. McKenzie, the brilliant Correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, "I witnessed a weary soldier who had gathered some neat bunches of violets from the fields placing them over each of his fallen comrades' graves." Nor are the enemy forgotten. Many of their dead are being buried already with every mark of respect and honourable recognition of their stubborn courage. There are, as noted in the last chapter, ghouls abroad in the foul shape of wandering Chinese scoundrels, who are busy rifling the bodies of the hated Russians, but this can only be in the trenches and parts of the battlefield remote from watchful eyes, for whom in general the scene is one of strange tranquillity.

The Japs who bore the brunt of the day's fighting are bivouacking upon the ground they have won. They are warmly clad, but have latterly discarded the second greatcoat—a blanket coat with fur collar—with which they were specially provided for the advance from the south during the cold weather. Such an extra burden, in addition to a rather elaborate kit, in which even a toothbrush is included, would have been a heavy handicap in the work of the past day, and will be quite as gladly dispensed with in the stiff marching to come. As for sleep, that comes soundly enough to the unwounded, and has to be struggled manfully against by those whose turn it is for "sentry-go." For, be the victory ever so complete, be the enemy ever so remote, the force that bivouacs on the battlefield must mount its guards and post its sentries with just the same rigorous exactitude as in quarters.

In the field-hospitals there is a painfully subdued hum of business as the wounded of both sides are dealt with by the skilful Japanese surgeons, whose tenderness excites the grateful admiration of the Russians coming under their friendly hands. The Japanese won an enviable reputation for their army hospital arrangements in the war with China, and this reputation they are finely maintaining now. The most modern appliances and the greatest scientific ability are available even in such surroundings as these for the alleviation of the ghastly sufferings which fighting, however refined and up-to-date, brings in its gloomy train. A Russian doctor is among the prisoners, and he subsequently speaks with the warmest admiration, coupled perhaps with some mental comparisons, of the extraordinary perfection to which the Japanese have brought the "merciful accessories" of cruel war.

In the quarters of all the generals there is also some degree of activity, for reports have to be received, orders issued, and arrangements made for the continuance of the advance. The three divisions are, of course, widely separated, but it may be safely assumed that some at least of the higher commanders have managed to meet and exchange congratulations on the result of the day's fighting. For General Kuroki there is much hard work immediately to be done. Last night, from Wi-ju, he telegraphed to Tokio, with which he is in communication presumably by way of Seoul, to the effect that he intended to assault at dawn. To-night, his message is a much longer and even more significant one. He will already have telegraphed some details of the fighting, but the last stand of the Russians at Hohmutang does not take place till seven o'clock in the evening, and the heavy casualty list at this point is rather a sad appendix to the previous record. But we may take it that before he retires to his well-earned rest on this memorable night, the fine old Satsuma has not only cabled through a terse summary of the whole day's proceedings, but has received very possibly a few words of acknowledgment of his fine performance and expressive of his Imperial Master's warm commendation of the exertions of himself and his brave army.

JAPANESE GENERAL OFFICER AND STAFF.

The morning of May 2nd finds the First Army of Japan moving steadily, if somewhat slowly, after the retreating Russians. Its pace may perhaps be regulated by a circumstance of which little notice was taken at the time except in a telegram from the Tokio Correspondent of the *Times.* It appears that on April 20 General Kuroki, in anticipation of his victory at Kiu-lien-cheng, had detached a mixed brigade under Major-General Sasaki, which, marching eastward, had crossed the Yalu at Chang-seng, some thirty-five miles north-east of Wi-ju, and had commenced to move on Feng-hwang-cheng by a mountain road. An allusion has already been made to the fondness of the Japanese, and more especially of their great strategist, Field-Marsal Yamagata, for converging columns. It may well be that after the battle of Kiu-lien-cheng General Kuroki desired to give full effect to the movement of the column under General Sasaki, and, possibly learning that it was being delayed by the extremely difficult nature of the country through which it was working, steadied his own advance. At any rate, not until May 3rd do we hear even of the Japanese scouts as having compassed more than twenty miles from Kiu-lien-cheng. On the day in question the Japanese cavalry had a sharp encounter with a Cossack patrol at Fang-hen-cheng, which lies about halfway between Kiu-lien-cheng and Feng-hwang-cheng, and, driving them back, pursued them for several miles.

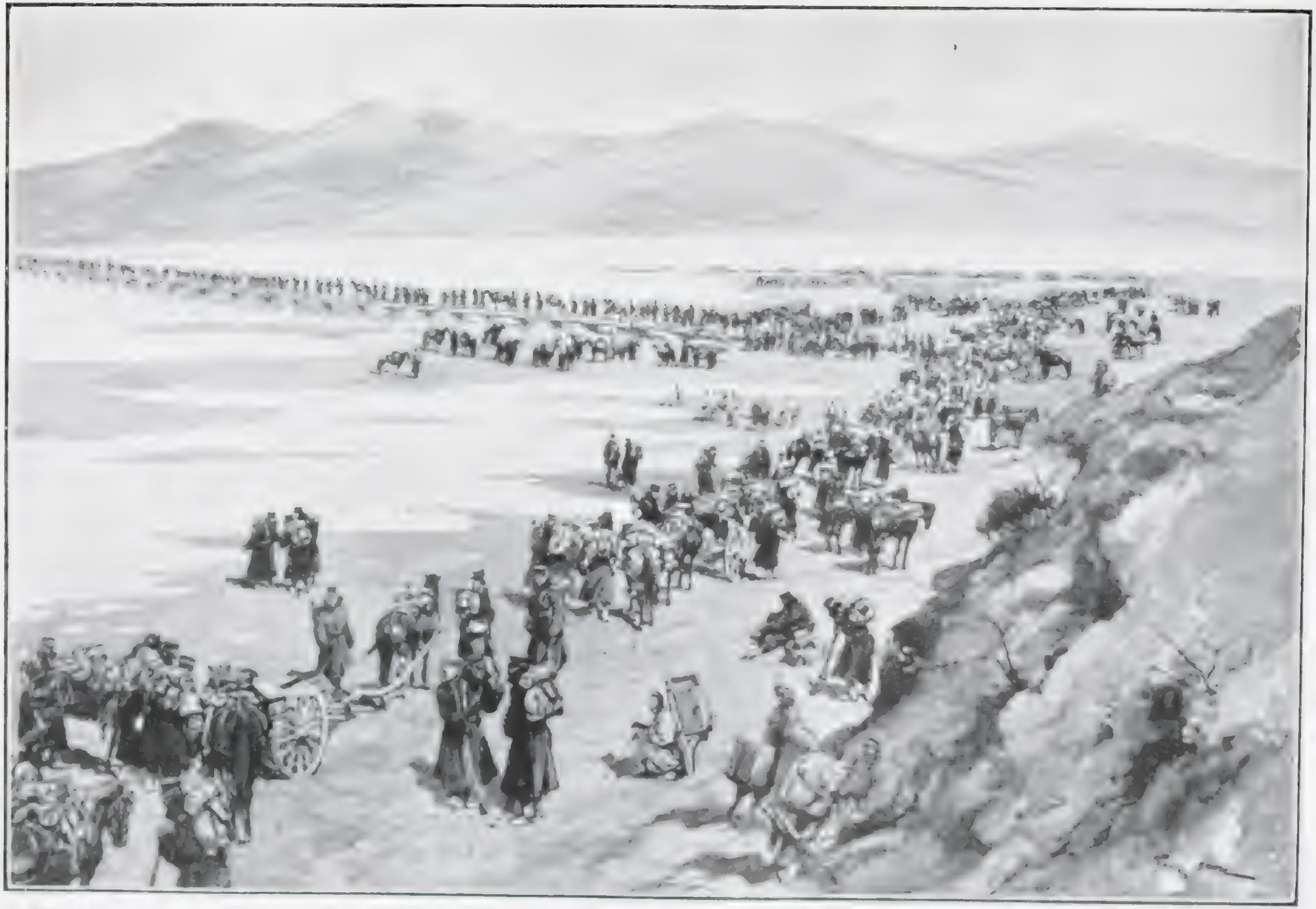
The road at this point is rather interesting as a study in topography. It runs between two ranges, one about 3,000 feet high to the north—this is the Feng-hwang range—and another about 2,000 feet high, which runs up to the Yalu and ends at right angles with the mountains which skirt the right bank of that river. The two ranges along the road from Kiu-lien-cheng to Feng-hwang-cheng are mostly about 2,000 yards apart, but come closer together at Kau-li-mon, "The Door of Korea," where formerly there began a strip of uninhabited land forming the frontier between China and Korea. From Kau-li-mon the road declines gradually towards the west, but at the west end of the Feng-hwang range it turns towards the north and takes the wayfarer quickly into Feng-hwang-cheng. (See map on p. 247.)

It was confidently expected that the Russians would make a vigorous stand at Kau-li-mon, and for a time they evidently intended to do so. Earthworks were thrown up on the hills north and south of the village, and reinforcements, including artillery, were brought up from Feng-hwang-cheng. But either a panic had set in, or reports had arrived of the gradual advance of General Sasaki's brigade, or General Kuropatkin had determined that there should be no serious fighting until he himself could supervise the Russian operations. For we hear of no opposition at Kau-li-mon, and on May 6th the capture of Feng-hwang-cheng itself takes place without difficulty. The first entry is made by General Sasaki's brigade, which may well be congratulated on such a brilliant termination to what must have been a terribly exhausting march.

The Russians burn some of their ammunition before evacuating Feng-hwang-cheng, but in an official report furnished by General Kuroki it is stated that 357 shells for mountain guns, 188,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 1,720 coats, and 40,000 loaves of bread, besides other supplies, tools, and telegraph stores, fall into the hands of the victorious Japanese.

The arrival of the Japanese at Feng-hwang-cheng is a matter of great importance, apart from the moral effect of the Russian retirement, and the substantial character of the booty. Feng-hwang-cheng is the junction of three roads, with two of which—one coming from Liao-yang, the other running to Kiu-lien-cheng and Antung on the Yalu—we have already made acquaintance in the course of this narrative. The third road runs to the west for some forty miles to Siu-yen in the Liao-tung Peninsula. It is expedient to take note of Siu-yen, from which a road runs in a north-westerly direction to Hai-cheng, while another road to the south-east terminates at Takushan, in Korea Bay.

What follows during the next fortnight is extremely interesting from a military point of view, but it is not easy to make it attractive to the lay reader. The operations of the Japanese, moreover, are shrouded in a certain obscurity which may never be completely dispelled, even by the publication of detailed official reports. At the same time an attempt may be made to convey a general idea of a situation which, as foreshadowed at the commencement of this chapter, is an altogether fresh one, so far as the First Army of Japan is concerned.



JAPANESE INFANTRY AND TRANSPORT
CROSSING A FROZEN RIVER

The first point to be noticed is the fact that the main bodies of both the Russian and Japanese forces are now separated by quite an inconsiderable interval. The distance between the headquarters of General Kuropatkin and General Kuroki is about eighty miles, or about as far as it is from London to Southampton. Of course, in neither case are the armies bunched up in crowded masses round the General's headquarters, and it is in the extent of the line occupied by the two forces, and in the direction which the lines take, that much of the interest of the present situation lies.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to give these data with complete accuracy; but it may be reckoned roughly that the Russian front extends from Hai-cheng, which lies about forty miles south-west of Liao-yang, to the Motien-ling Pass, which is some thirty-five miles south-east of Liao-yang on the road to Feng-hwang-cheng. This brings the actual distance between even Feng-hwang-cheng and the left of the Russian position down to about forty-five miles. But the Japanese line is also an extended one, running south-west and north-east from Feng-hwang-cheng, and here, too, there are troops considerably in advance of the General's headquarters. As a matter of fact, it is reported on May 19th that a Japanese advanced division is in touch with the enemy near the Motien-ling Pass, where a considerable force of Cossacks has its headquarters.

Before this contact is established, however, a good deal of work is done on both sides, and not a little desultory fighting takes place. The weather has become much warmer, and, although the country is difficult by reason of the recent rains, both opponents are in excellent condition, and capable of covering distances which would be deemed a heavy pull upon many European troops, at any rate in peace manœuvres. Both sides work hard to strengthen their positions with earthworks, and there is every indication that each regards the other with considerable respect.

It is already sufficiently obvious that General Kuroki was fully justified in not dashing in headlong pursuit of the Russians after the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng. Such a course might have provoked a series of stubborn stands like that at Hohmutang, which would have cost the Japanese dear and produced little real advantage. But, by pressing on steadily, with General Sasaki's brigade converging on Feng-hwang-cheng from the right, Kuroki has secured a new position at no loss, and is now within striking distance of the main Russian Army. But he cannot strike as yet, except at a risk which he is far too level-headed to take, even if he were given a free hand by the controlling council at Tokio. He may have as many as 60,000 troops with him, but General Kuropatkin has more, and is, moreover, in a position the strength of which is known to the Japanese by their experience in the war with China. The Motien-ling Pass is one of those awkward places which a few men armed with machine guns can defend against an army, and, as through this the main road to Liao-yang runs, there is no safe course open to General Kuroki except a great turning movement, carried out either by a force detached from his own army, or by one of the two other armies which Japan has available for the purpose.

Accordingly, General Kuroki, although at first he seems by the Russian reports to be advancing from Feng-hwang-cheng, does not trouble himself for the present to do more than establish contact with the enemy, and declines altogether to be drawn by Russian taunts as to his "apparent indecision" into anything like a forward move. For some three weeks after the capture of Feng-hwang-cheng the principal work of the First Army consists in throwing up earthworks, deliberate extensions of the line occupied, and reconnaissances, chiefly in the direction of the Motienling, in the course of which a fair number of casualties occur on both sides.

The Russians are not less cautious. It might be supposed that General Kuropatkin, seeing before him an army numerically a good deal inferior to his own, would advance boldly against it, and seek to destroy it, as has been done before in several historical instances by generals operating on what are known as "interior lines." It is sometimes the best of policy, when one anticipates the descent upon one's position of two forces individually inferior, but collectively superior, to one's own, to issue forth and attack the two opponents in detail. Whether this course would be the best that General Kuropatkin could follow in this case, it is impossible to judge until much more material is available. The main point, however, as far as this narrative is concerned, is that the Russians do not attack, but merely allow their Cossacks to hover about the enemy's front and even to harass his rear and communications. The Cossacks are extremely well handled at this juncture by General Mishtchenko, and it is very possible that their discoveries have much to do with Kuropatkin's resolution to continue on the defensive until a further development of the Japanese plan of campaign on land takes place. Whatever may be the exact state of the case, the fact remains that the last week in May finds the armies of Kuropatkin and Kuroki still facing one another in the region between Liao-yang and Feng-hwang-cheng, none but minor engagements between patrols having taken place, and no disposition having been shown on either side to hasten the next development of an ominous situation.

Photo. Copyright [illegible]

GENERAL KUROPATKIN BEING RECEIVED UPON ARRIVAL AT THE FRONT BY GENERALS RENNENKAMPF AND [illegible]

From photo by Mrs. Bishop, F.R.G.S.

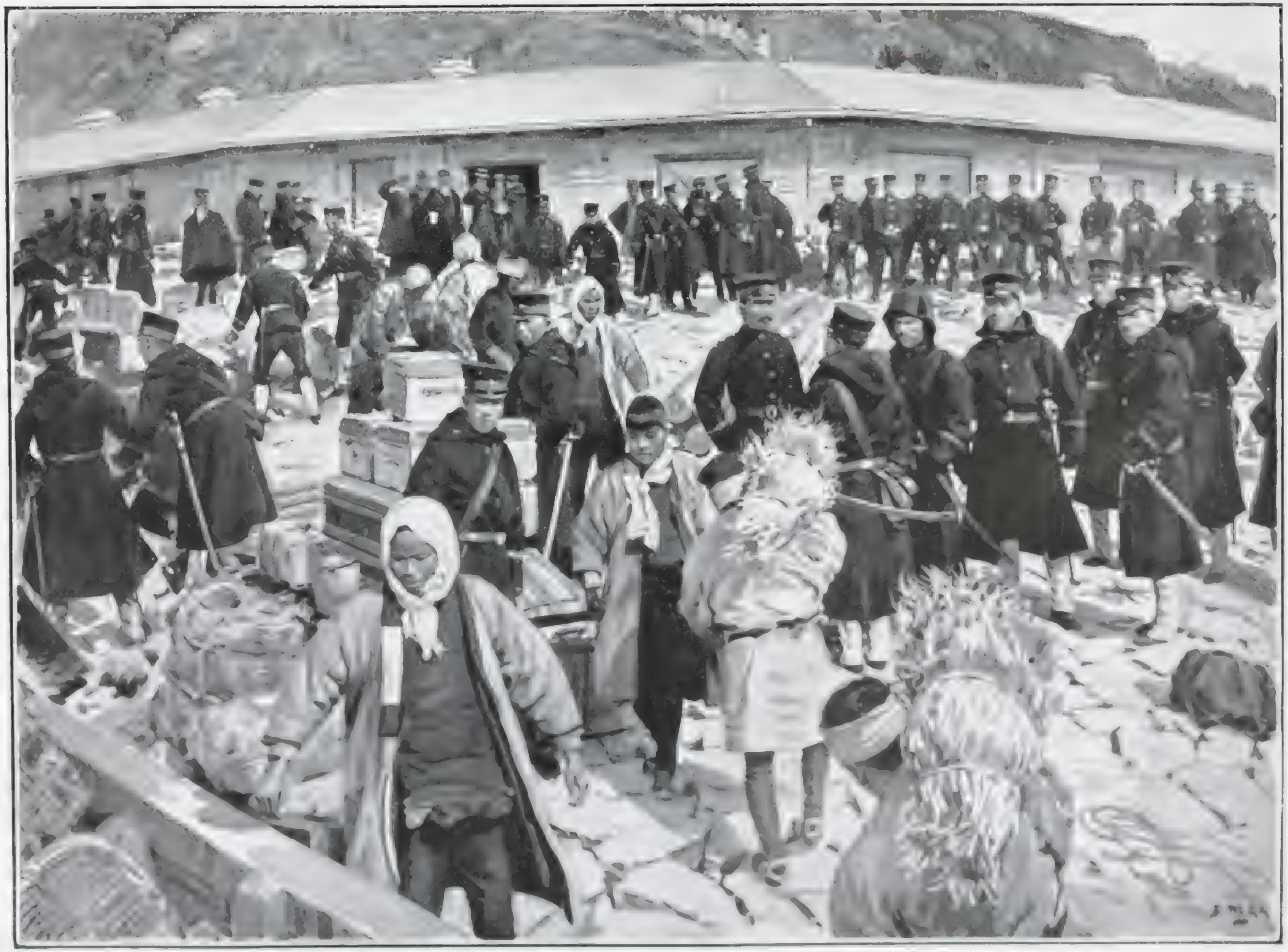
THE TEMPLE OF THE FOX, MUKDEN.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SECOND ARMY OF JAPAN—LANDINGS IN THE LIAO-TUNG PENINSULA—AN AFFAIR NEAR KIN-CHAU—PORT ARTHUR ISOLATED—A LANDING AT KAI-CHAU—NIU-CHWANG ALARMED—FIGHT NEAR TAKUSHAN—SURVEY OF LAND OPERATIONS.

IT will be remembered that in Chapter XVII. mention was made of the landing on May 5th of a Japanese force near Pi-tsu-wo, on the east coast of the Liao-tung Peninsula, and that in General Stoessel's Order to the Port Arthur garrison, quoted on page 219, there is an allusion to another landing in the vicinity of Kin-chau Bay. It has already been hinted that these landings presage a very important development. It may now be clearly stated that here we have the first indication of Japan's movement to the front of her Second Army under the command of General Oku.

This army has not come direct from Japan. As a matter of fact, it has been lying in readiness at Chinnampo, in the estuary of the Ta-tung River, and it is not put on board for its second trip until May 3rd or 4th. The existence of the Second Army has been clear for some time, but there can be few who have guessed its precise whereabouts at the end of April, although the actual revelation is not at all surprising. It may be surmised that something in the nature of a very elaborate precaution is indicated here. If the First Army had sustained a reverse on the Yalu, or had even



A WELL-ORGANISED DISEMBARKATION: SCENE ON THE BEACH AT CHEMULPO.

failed in the attempt to turn the Russians out of Kiu-lien-cheng, it would manifestly have been extraordinarily convenient to be able to reinforce it with, at any rate, a portion of the Second Army, which could readily have been moved up from Chinnampo by way of Ping-yang.

Assuming a moderately successful passage of the Yalu, the original Japanese idea is said to have been a landing of the Second Army *en masse* in Korea Bay at Taku-shan. But the victory at Kiu-lien-cheng was more complete than had been anticipated, and consequently a change took place in the Japanese plan. Evidently the moment is thought to be a propitious one for the isolation of Port Arthur, and it is believed that this can now be carried out by the three Divisions of the Japanese Second Army, leaving other troops to be landed at Taku-shan as originally arranged.

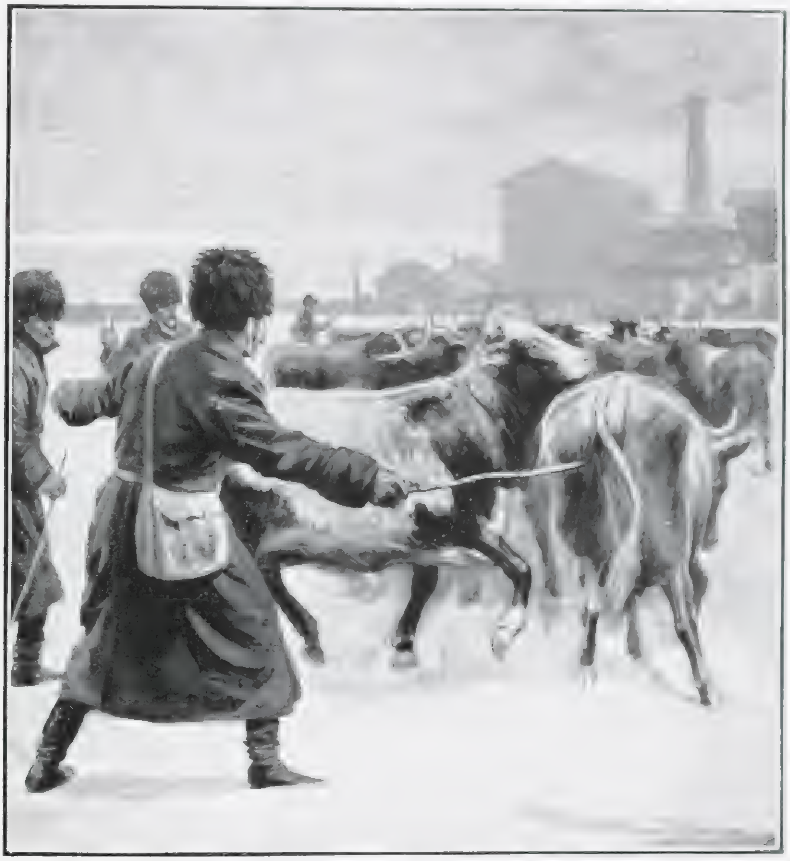
Accordingly, on May 3rd, Chinnampo sees signs of extensive preparations for a move on the part of the eighty odd transports which are crowding the estuary. For some time past the most careful precautions have been taken to prevent the leakage of information regarding the Japanese movements. Chinnampo has been placed under martial law, and no one has been allowed to leave the town or enter, an ordinance which, however, three Europeans succeed in evading by putting off in a junk and making for Chemulpo.

The Second Army is evidently at full strength, with reserve brigades, for it is estimated to number 70,000 men. These are crowded on to the vessels, as a Reuter's Correspondent says, like rats, no fewer than 3,800 being put on board one ship. Every deck is so packed that it is impossible for the men to take any exercise, and the majority cannot even get fresh air. But not a grumbling word is heard. The First Army in its march northwards was stimulated by the news of the Navy's exploits; for the Second Army there is the added incentive of anxiety to emulate the glorious deeds of the Guards, and of the 2nd and 12th Divisions before Kiu-lien-cheng.

The Second Army of Japan consists of the 1st Provisional Division, the home headquarters of which is at Tokio, the 3rd Division from Nagoya, and the 4th Division from Osaka.

We have already seen how, on May 5th, the Japanese landed near Pi-tsu-wo, sending a detachment to that place to destroy, it afterwards appears, the telegraph line, and another detachment across the peninsula to Pu-lan-tien, to cut the railway. The damage to the railway is at first inconclusive, and, as noted in Chapter XVII., a Russian train is taken through to Port Arthur over the repaired line by Colonel Spiridonoff, the Japanese retiring temporarily from Pu-lan-tien. But they return quickly, and by May 13th the railway and telegraph have been cut in various places, and to the north-east of Pu-lan-tien the line has been torn up for some miles. By the middle of May, then, Port Arthur is as completely isolated as was Ladysmith, and with far less chance of relief, since General Kuropatkin at Liao-yang, who alone could render assistance, is being something more than "contained" by General Kuroki.

Almost simultaneously with the landing at Pi-tsu-wo another disembarkation takes place in Kin-chau Bay. On May 16th, after a number of minor skirmishes, a warm engagement takes place between the Japanese and a Russian force sent out from Port Arthur and Dalny on what is virtually a sortie. The casualties on both sides appear to be about 150, but the Japanese being evidently in greatly superior strength, drive the three Russian regiments sent against them southwards, and take possession of a line of hills extending four miles, and lying a mile and a half to the north of Kin-chau. The latter is thus partially dominated, and the Japanese lines are now only some forty miles from Port Arthur.



COSSACKS COLLECTING BULLOCKS FOR THE [illegible]

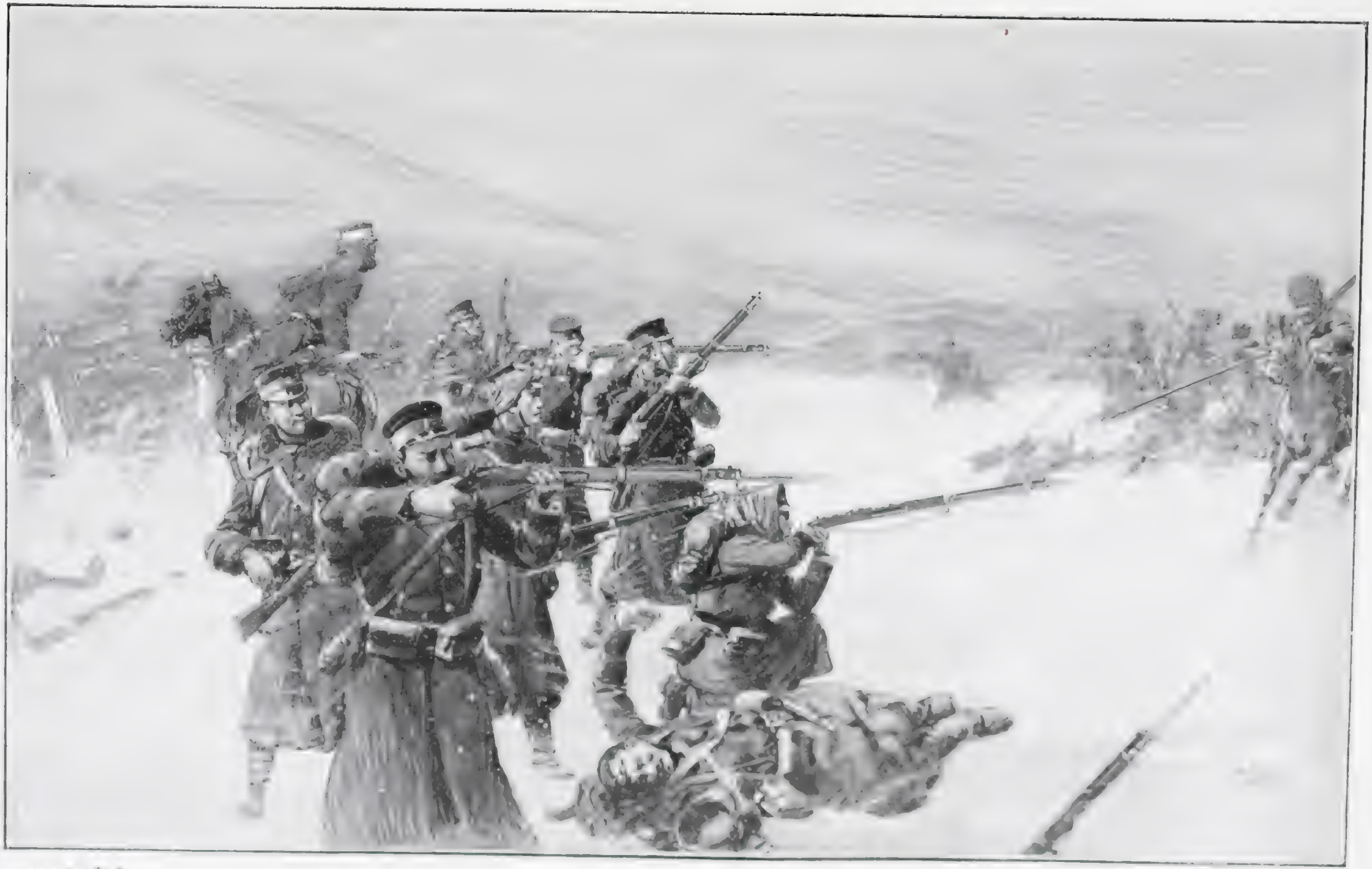
On the same day as the engagement near Kin-chau, a fleet of Japanese transports, accompanied by warships, appears before Kai-chau or, as it is sometimes called, Kai-ping, which lies about twenty miles south-east of Niu-chwang. There are shore defences here and a small Russian garrison, upon which the warships open fire, silencing the batteries and causing the troops to retreat. A Japanese force lands, and proceeds to Ta-shi-chao (the "City of the Big Stone Bridge"), which lies at the junction of the Manchurian Railway with the line to Yingkow (the port of Niu-chwang). Here the Japs destroy four miles of railway, and then re-embark from Kai-chau.

As may be imagined, this proceeding causes some sensation in Niu-chwang, the European inhabitants of which confidently anticipate that the Japanese will forthwith advance and occupy the town. The Russian garrison retires, but, when it becomes known that the Japanese have re-embarked, they gradually return and re-occupy the place in some force. A correspondent at Niu-chwang during this period describes the Russian officers as quite bewildered and disheartened, and unable to form lasting plans. Some of them, after bidding touching farewells, return in a few hours with their personal baggage, and proceed as if nothing had happened. A mile south of Niu-chwang entrenchments are commenced by the troops, but are almost immediately abandoned. The General commanding, Kondratovitch, is praised for the firmness and rectitude of his civil administration, but it is believed that the higher authorities at Mukden are responsible for the vacillation displayed in handling the Niu-chwang garrison.

The exact meaning of this sudden descent upon Kai-chau is not very clear, but it is surmised that the landing was merely a feint to cover other operations. Another suggestion of perhaps greater weight is that this is merely a prelude to a more important development, in which a genuine occupation of Niu-chwang and a forward movement upon Liao-yang will be included. Be this as it may, the incident serves to keep Niu-chwang in evidence, and to remind us of its strategical importance both as regards Liao-yang and Mukden, and with more remote reference to Port Arthur. For, although the main line from Mukden to Port Arthur does not pass through Niu-chwang (the port of which, as noted above, is fed by a branch line from Ta-shi-chao), the town is on the main road, and main roads usually increase in importance when railway communications have been badly damaged.

On May 19th yet another landing takes place at Taku-shan, in Korea Bay, under the protection of a squadron commanded by the Admiral Hosoya, who so ably conducted the naval operations in the Yalu preparatory to, and during, the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng. Admiral Hosoya begins by bombarding the coast, along which it is probable that there are assembled a few Russian troops detached from the Russian right, and sent forward from Hai-cheng through Siu-yen. There is no serious opposition, and a force of bluejackets is rapidly landed and the Japanese flag raised on a commanding position. The disembarkation then proceeds in the usual clockwork fashion, and in this case it is evident that the Japs have come to stay. For on the following evening a brisk little engagement takes place seven miles north of Taku-shan, which is clear evidence that in this landing there is no mere feint, nor that only a reconnaissance in force is intended.

It is about 7 p.m. when a sotnia of Cossacks is observed by a force of Japanese infantry to be working in the direction of Taku-shan, evidently with the intention of obtaining what information it can with reference to yesterday's disembarkation. The Cossacks must be advancing somewhat incautiously, for the nimble Japanese manage to work round to their rear and surround them. In such a case cavalry have very little chance, except by cutting their way through the enemy and trusting to their horses' heels. Apparently the Cossacks think at first of offering a resistance. But the ring round them is complete, and, before they succeed in getting away



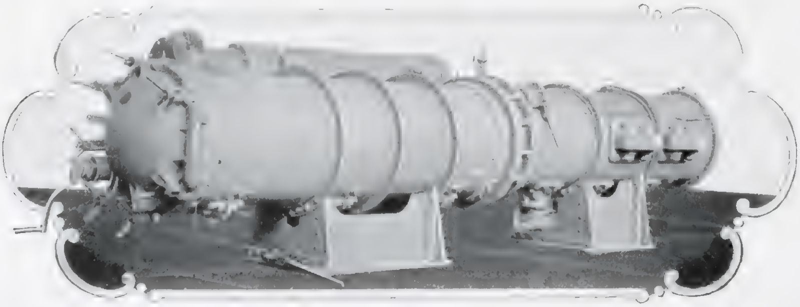
[illegible]

in the direction of Siu-yen, they have left an officer and nine men dead on the field, and two officers and four men in the hands of the enemy. The incident is not magnificent even from the Japanese standpoint, but it can well be imagined that, for infantry who have only just been landed, and who have seen no previous service, it is a great encouragement to have thus at the outset inflicted a sharp blow at the enemy's cavalry, with, as it appears, the loss of one man only.

Owing to the secrecy with which the Japanese have veiled the composition of the forces which have been disembarked at various points of the Liao-tung Peninsula and at Taku-shan, it is impossible to define the early movements of the Second Army much more fully and clearly than has been done in the foregoing succinct narrative. But what has been said will at least give a fair idea of the manner in which the Japanese are gradually effecting a double object, that of isolating Port Arthur, and of supporting a future forward movement upon the heart of the Russian position.

With regard to the isolation of Port Arthur, that is practically complete, so far as immediate investment is concerned. The railway is broken up beyond hope of early repair, and a line is being drawn across the narrow neck of land between Kin-chau Bay and Talien Bay, a line which the Japanese are fortifying strongly, and arming with quick-firing guns as a protection against a determined sortie by the garrison. Strategically speaking, the isolation is even now not complete, for it is conceivable that a Russian force could be, at this eleventh hour, detached from Liao-yang and sent down into Liao-tung Peninsula with the object of getting the Japanese at Kin-chau between two fires. But there are practical objections to any such bold movement, and in any case we may shortly see this one doubtful feature in the Japanese position remedied.

Already, with only two armies indicated, the Japanese have not only crossed the Yalu and cut off the land communications between Port Arthur and Liao-yang, but are beginning to threaten Kuropatkin from another quarter, perhaps from two other quarters, besides from the line which runs north-east and south-west from Feng-hwang-cheng. There is added pressure yet to come, but the time has not yet arrived to indicate its nature and source. Let us leave the principal land operations at this interesting point, and revert first to Vladivostok and Korea, and afterwards to a survey of the work of the Japanese Fleet, more especially in the vicinity of Port Arthur.



From photo supplied by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Mitchell & Co., Ltd.

TORPEDO TUBE AS USED ON JAPANESE WARSHIPS.

CHAPTER XXII.

KOREA AND VLADIVOSTOK—INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES—COSSACKS ATTACK AN-JU—A WARM RECEPTION—FURTHER RAIDING—VLADIVOSTOK—THE STRANDING OF THE *BOGATYR*—ARRIVAL OF ADMIRAL SKRYDLOFF.

WHAT may be termed the interludes of war are often extremely interesting, and sometimes, too, highly instructive, because they seldom fail either to have a direct bearing upon the results of a campaign or to illustrate and explain its progress. In such an extended conflict as that between Russia and Japan there are necessarily a great many "interludes" which cannot be examined in a narrative of this sort without rather obscuring the main story; but there are some which may well be recorded, more especially, in this instance, those in connection with Vladivostok and Korea.

Hitherto the part taken by these two sections of the area included in the theatre of war has not been very impressive in point of downright warlike episodes. Off Chemulpo we have seen a naval action of a sort, that in which the *Varyag* and *Korietz* were sunk; we have witnessed important disembarkations, and a steady march of a large body of troops northwards to the Yalu; and we have had to record a brisk little engagement at Chong-ju. But not until the opposite bank of the Yalu was reached, and Manchuria entered, was there any fighting on an extensive scale. Nor is it likely that for some considerable time to come, if ever, will Korea again be the scene of important collisions between the Russian and Japanese forces. Still, it is quite impossible to understand this war properly without keeping Korea in view, not only as one of the two original "bones of contention," but also as the source of a curious variety of dramatic possibilities. Without attempting to force comparisons, Korea is to those who are following the Russo-Japanese War rather like what Natal was after the relief of Ladysmith to those who were interested in the course of events in South Africa.

Similarly, Vladivostok has not hitherto been surrounded by any of the same sensational actualities as have enlivened the existence of Port Arthur. It has been bombarded, it has been pinched in the matter of supplies, and it has sent forth a squadron which, in the course of two or three cruises, has sunk some merchantmen and a transport. But, inglorious as its record has been, doubtful as it is whether it will for some time to come witness any more thrilling developments, Vladivostok must not be neglected, any more than Korea, as a place to be periodically "brought up to date" in the minds of those who are trying to realise the War as a whole, and not as a jumble of scattered episodes.

Giving precedence to Korea, to which we bade *au revoir* on the evening of April 30th, when General Kuroki's army crossed the Yalu in order to turn the Russians out of Kiu-lien-cheng, we find ourselves on May 10th at An-ju, between forty and fifty miles north of Ping-yang, the position of which may be picturesquely realised from the graphic map given on page 139. Here there is a little Japanese garrison of about 200 infantry, doubtless bemoaning their hard luck in being left behind, while their comrades have been winning glory on the Yalu, and are now coming into actual touch with the enemy between the Motien-ling Pass and Feng-hwang-cheng.

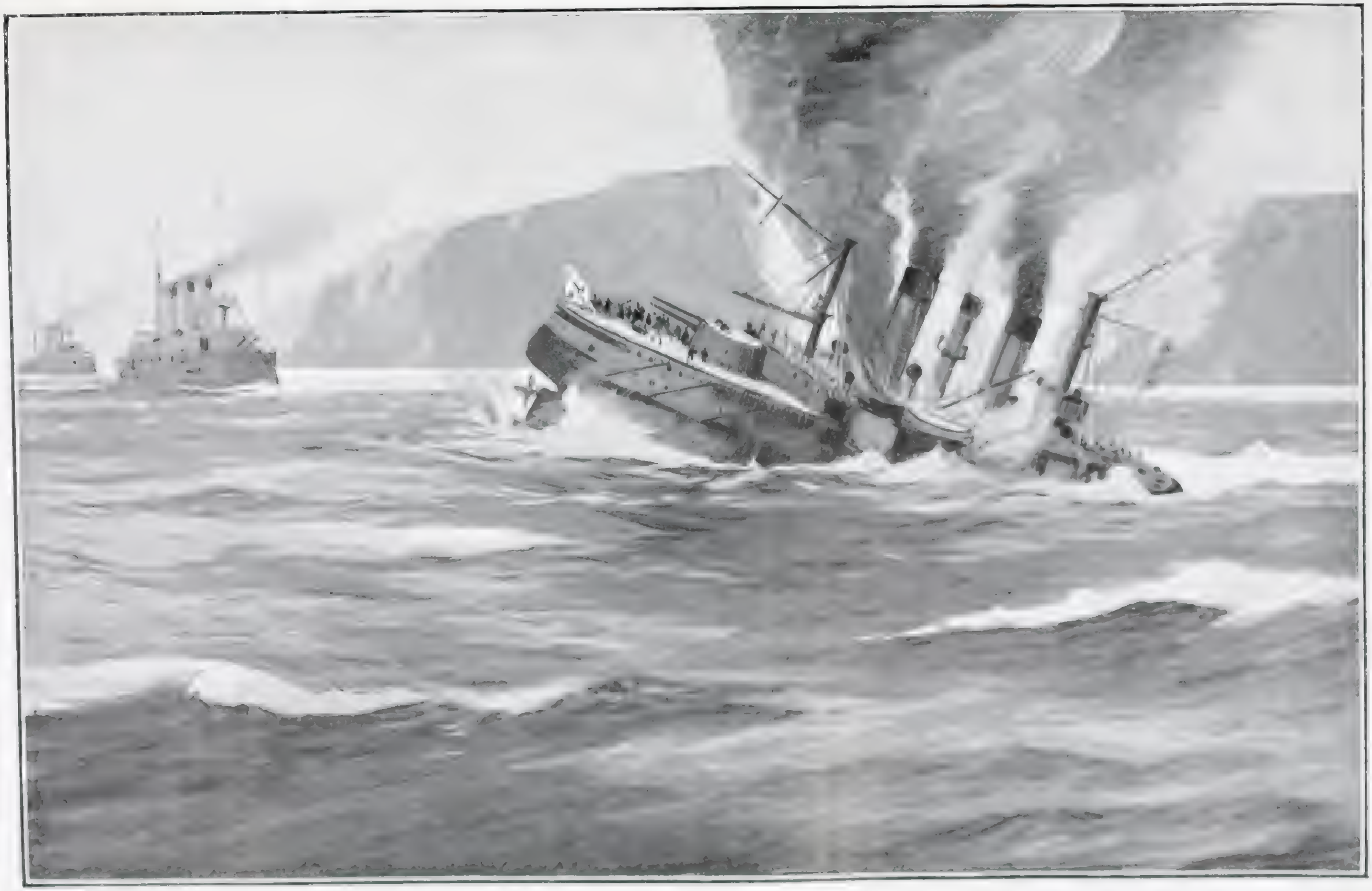
An-ju possesses what might by a bold stretch of imagination be called a fort, but is really only an old-fashioned sort of castle, with walls which even mountain artillery would soon reduce to dust. Still these walls are fairly high, and the stones of which they are constructed are of good size, affording moderate protection for infantry against musketry fire.

Japanese military discipline is strict, so even thus far in rear of General Kuroki's advance such posts as are being held exhibit no slackness on the part of their garrisons. There is, moreover, a definite inducement to alertness in the fact that the conduct of the Koreans of late has given some trouble, more especially as regards the destruction of the telegraph wires which carry messages between Kuroki's army and Seoul. Again, there have been various reports that Cossacks are commencing to raid into Korea by way of harassing the lines of communication.

On the morning of May 10th, we may picture a Jap sentry looking out from the castellated walls of An-ju, and seeing in the distance a little blur on the horizon gradually materialise into a group of horsemen. He gives the alarm, the officers of the garrison mount the walls and scrutinise the oncoming body with their glasses, and it is quickly discovered that here is unquestionably a force of Cossacks some hundreds strong, who, from the dispositions they are making, are evidently "bent on business." The garrison is at once fallen in, told off to various points in the walls, and arrangements made for the supply of reserve ammunition. No thought of surrender enters any mind, but, as a measure of ordinary precaution, a message is despatched north and south to the nearest posts stating the circumstances, and suggesting the despatch of reinforcements. For it is clear that there are other objects to be usefully attained besides a stubborn defence of An-ju. The Cossacks must be given, if possible, a sharp lesson, and, though the glory may be greater if the small garrison can win the coming fight unaided, the Japs are far too sensible to leave more than they can help to chance.

Let us now travel over to the attackers whose presence before An-ju this fine May morning needs some explanation. The exact strength of the force appears doubtful, but it is said to be the greater part of a flying column consisting of 600 Trans-Baikal and 100 Ussuri Cossacks which a fortnight ago started from Liao-yang, and has been marching at the rate of over twenty-five miles a day.

The despatch of this raiding column from Liao-yang is indeed a bold stroke on General Kuropatkin's part, and one which he may have regretted when the news of the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng arrived. For it is a fact that these Cossacks who have arrived before An-ju on the morning of May 10th are in total ignorance of the battle, and are consequently but ill-prepared for the sort of reception they are about to encounter. Had the results of the passage of the Yalu been known at Liao-yang before the column started, the latter would doubtless have been warned to approach very cautiously posts known to be held



THE SINKING OF THE PETROPAVLOVSK.

by infantry among whom a proportion of marksmen were certain to be found. Further, the whole idea of the column is based upon a misconception. It imagines that by attacking An-ju it is striking at the real lines of communication between Kuroki's army and its base. But, although Ping-yang must continue to be a base of a sort, and of a very important sort, Kuroki's advanced base, since the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng, has been shifted to Antung, to which supplies can readily be brought by sea. To the lay mind the mistake may not seem serious, but in a military sense such errors as that which underlies this foolish attack on An-ju afford a very grave example of the risk of sending out raiding columns "in the air," *i.e.* without any means of either reinforcing them or keeping them posted in the course of events.

It is said that the Cossacks before An-ju number some 500, but that half of them are not in any mood for fighting. Provisions are beginning to run very short, and an ill-fed force which has ridden some 350 miles through a difficult country in less than a fortnight, may well require a little pulling together. However, the officers insist, and a considerable proportion of the column settles itself down to "make it warm" for the Japanese garrison.

It is very soon evident that, as at Chong-ju, the Cossacks have their work cut out for them, and the "yellow-skins" are going to give a good deal more trouble than was at first anticipated. From the quaint old walls of the castle the bullets come whistling, not only independently, but in ugly and well-directed volleys, which effectually bar any attempt to carry the place by a bold swoop. Moreover, the walls are, as has been said, fairly high, and against such obstacles cavalry without artillery are of small account. Still, the Cossacks are probably aware that they are in superior force, for they continue the fight, notwithstanding the fact that a number of them have been killed and wounded, and that at least one officer has been picked off by the Japanese sharpshooters.

Towards evening a reinforcement of Japanese soldiers comes from the direction of Ping-yang, and in the morning further help arrives from both north and south, and the Cossacks retire hastily eastward, carrying their wounded with them, and leaving no fewer than sixty-three of their number killed on the field. The Japanese casualties are officially stated to have been four killed and six wounded.

The Cossacks continue raiding in Korea, but they appear to have had quite enough of the western parts, and bear off to the north-east, evidently with the intention of joining hands with other Cossacks who have been operating in the Ham-yeng-do province, and have even approached to within forty miles of Gen-san. On May 19th some 300 of them attacked Ham-yeng, or, as it is sometimes called, Kan-kow, where there is a "castle" occupied at the date mentioned by some 300 Korean troops. The attack, which was made at seven o'clock in the evening, was evidently not intended very seriously, and resolved itself into a mere interchange of shots, resulting in the death of one Korean soldier and the retirement of the Russians towards the north-west. But the incident is interesting as showing Russian activity in this quarter, and may also serve the useful purpose of establishing a connection in the present narrative between Korea and Vladivostok, to which we are about to transfer our attention.

For it is clear that these last Cossacks who have been operating in the north-east of the Hermit Kingdom have no connection with the main body of the Russian forces under Kuropatkin at Liao-yang, but have been detached from a command which has its centre in or near Vladivostok. It has already been explained in Chapter XVI. that in the region between Vladivostok and the Tumen River, which forms the north-east boundary of Korea, there are numerous Cossack villages, and it is now becoming clearer that in this quarter are collected a large number of Russian troops, whose subsequent movements will require to be very attentively watched.

Thus working northward we come once again to Vladivostok, which at the beginning of May is probably unconscious of a new danger with which it is about to be menaced. This is the establishment by the Japanese of a fresh naval base at Port Lazareff, which lies on the northern side of the bay at the southern extremity of which Gen-san is situated. This base will assist the Japanese greatly in maintaining the constant watch upon Vladivostok which is absolutely necessary in view of the continued existence of the Vladivostok squadron. Port Lazareff appears admirably chosen for the purpose in view, and, as the entrance is protected by mines, little fear is entertained of any descent from Vladivostok by Admiral Jessen and his four big cruisers.

Evidently the intermittent appearance of Japanese torpedo-craft, coupled it may be with the news of the Russian reverse at Kiu-lien-cheng, is getting gradually on the nerves of the Vladivostok authorities. For about the middle of May a proclamation is issued by the Commandant, General Voronets, directing the withdrawal of the civilian residents, who forthwith betake themselves beyond the Amur River. A casual indication of the prevailing scarcity is furnished by the unusual appearance of the Vladivostok daily paper, the *Oriental Courier*. This organ is now reduced to half its former size, and, as the supplies of printing paper have given out, thin grey packing paper has to be used, a humiliating resort for the leading paper of the "Sovereign City of the East"!

But Vladivostok has other troubles besides panicky proclamations and an ill-printed newspaper. Admiral Jessen has lately been making a so-called "sortie" with his squadron, and in one of the very thick fogs which are of such frequent occurrence in the Sea of Japan a Russian ship runs ashore outside Vladivostok. This is the cruiser *Bogatyr*, one of the newest vessels in the Russian Navy. For a time the magnitude of the disaster is not understood in Europe, or is minimised by officials anxious to believe that there will be no difficulty in rescuing the vessel.

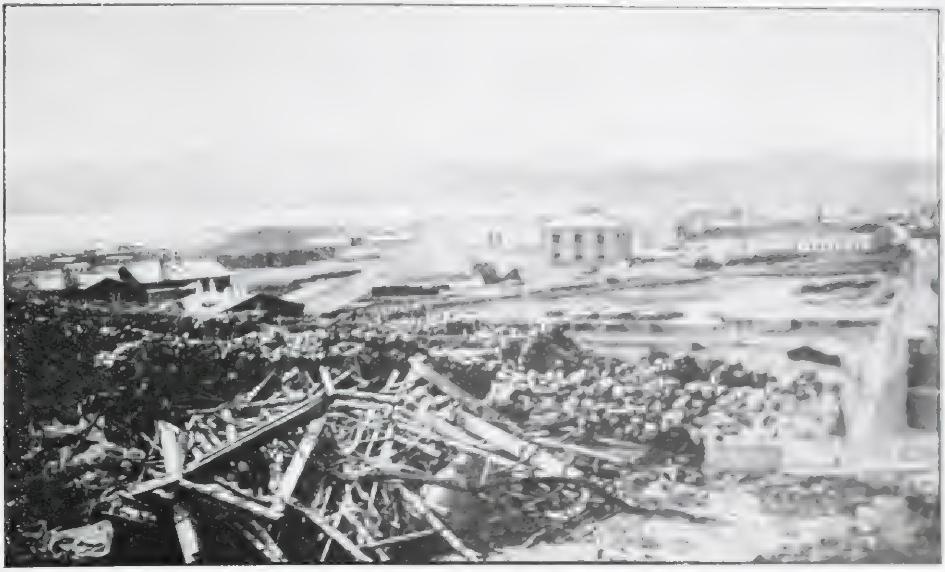
The *Bogatyr* is a big protected cruiser completed in 1902 by the Vulcan Company at Stettin, who secured the contract in competition with French and American shipbuilders, and she is similar in armament and tonnage to the unfortunate *Varyag*. She is the second of a group of eight vessels of the *Pallada* class, and can steam twenty-four knots. Her displacement is some 6,700 tons, and she carries twelve 6-in., twelve 3-in., and ten smaller guns, and represents an expenditure of at least half a million sterling.

The hopes at first entertained of saving the *Bogatyr* prove groundless, and eventually Admiral Jessen decides upon blowing her up to avoid any chance of her falling into the hands of the enemy, who, with superior appliances, and in the security afforded by their supremacy at sea, might succeed in making some use of the vessel or of her machinery. The guns are removed, and there is no loss of life, but the blow is a heavy one to the only mobile squadron which Russia now possesses in the Far East.

At this juncture Admiral Skrydloff arrives to take charge of the Russian naval forces in the Pacific. It is a painful circumstance that his advent at the front, like his appointment, should follow on a naval disaster, and there is a special irony in recalling his former design of dividing his attentions between Port Arthur and Vladivostok. The Admiral has not made any undue haste to take up his duties, for the fourth week in May has now commenced, and Port Arthur has for some days been sufficiently isolated to preclude any chance of an entry by rail or road. Admiral Skrydloff has suggested to Admiral Alexeieff that he should be permitted to attempt to land at Port Arthur in a Chinese vessel, but the Viceroy not unnaturally declines to sanction any such wild-goose project.

Whether in consequence of this refusal or otherwise, there is said to be considerable friction between the two authorities, and it is even reported that Alexeieff declines to receive Skrydloff at Mukden.

ADMIRAL SKRYDLOFF.



EFFECT OF THE FIRST BOMBARDMENT UPON THE NEW TOWN, PORT ARTHUR.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BREAKING-UP OF DALNY—EXPLODED HOPES—"SWEEPING" FOR MINES—A TORPEDO-BOAT LOST—A CRUISER ALSO—STILL FURTHER LOSS—SINKING OF THE JAPANESE CRUISER *YOSHINO*—A GOOD NAVAL RECORD—BELEAGUERED PORT ARTHUR.

On May 12th it is reported at St. Petersburg that Admiral Alexeieff has notified to the Tsar the destruction by the Russians themselves of the docks and piers at Dalny. Later telegrams indicate that the whole port of Dalny has been destroyed, and, naturally, the news creates a considerable sensation throughout the civilised world. Eventually it is discovered that the self-inflicted damage is not so great as was originally reported, the attempts to blow up the docks not having proved successful. But the iron pier running out into Talien Bay has been wrecked, and various launches, steamers, and engineering works have been blown to atoms. Further, a number of civilian residents, both Russian and Chinese, are put on board junks on which they make the best of their way to Chifu.

It appears that this wholesale sacrifice of what has cost the Russians during the past few years some millions of roubles is not the outcome of any sudden counsel of despair, but has for some time been contemplated in view of the complete isolation of Port Arthur by land as well as by sea. The idea is that any scheme of defence which would include Dalny would either absorb an immense number of men and guns, or weaken the chances of successful resistance by distributing a comparatively small force over a number of points. Accordingly it has been resolved gradually to bring in all the troops in Kwang-tung, which is the southern extremity of the Liao-tung Peninsula, into the circle of the Port Arthur defences, and in the meantime to render it difficult for the Japanese to use Dalny hereafter as a ready-made base of operations against the great southern stronghold.

Although there is ample military justification for this measure, its adoption must be terribly distasteful to Russia, which has made tremendous efforts to convert Dalny into a great commercial emporium, the complement of Port Arthur, and a sort of apology for the latter's existence. While Port Arthur was to be the pivot of Russia's warlike defence of its policy of annexation, Dalny, a score of miles to the south-east, was to be an advertisement of her anxiety to spread civilisation and to foster trade. From the *Daily Telegraph* a short but striking extract may be quoted, showing what use Russia made of her acquisition of Talien Bay on the same "lease" as that on which she secured possession of Port Arthur:—

"Other nations might have thrown this sheet of water open, and left a town to be evolved in the old slow way. Not so Russia. She sent business experts, and engineers to survey the site and prepare plans, and, hey presto! a contract had been signed with a contractor to construct, complete in every detail, a seaport town at the end of the great Siberian line. It was stated that it was intended to spend £5,000,000 on this one project, and although labour was cheap it does not appear that this figure was excessive, in view of the many-sided character of the task of creating an entrepôt for Manchuria. Dalny was the foundation-stone of Russia's commercial régime in the Far East. Amid a series of barren hills, the shores of the bay shallow and shelving, Russia set to work. The mud was to be dredged away to give more deep water space, docks excavated, warehouses and shops built, a great railway depôt created at one point on the long, artificially-retained sea-front, spacious boulevards and wide macadamised streets made, a large hotel with every comfort erected, shady gardens planted, and away from the hum and bustle and tarry smells of the great commercial settlement plans were prepared for a model suburb. Dalny, in fact, was to be the Garden City of the Far East, a place in which it would be a profit and a joy to live.

"With lightning rapidity the town, with all its adjuncts, began to grow; great tracts of land were reclaimed from the sea; a miniature mountain was cut off; dredging operations were taken in hand, not of the petty character seen at Portsmouth or Plymouth, but by the square mile; and almost before the world was conscious of what was happening, Dalny existed."

It would seem that Russia had not been conspicuously successful in attracting a resident population to Dalny, as she had to that other astonishing product of her Far Eastern policy, Harbin. But she is very patient, and might ultimately have succeeded fully in realising her magnificent project but for her fatuous inability to understand Japan. As it is, a mass of confident hopes, a host of proud ambitions, and, perhaps, some few really philanthropic aspirations, are blown to dust in the explosions which take place "by order" at Dalny in the second week of May.

This indication of the Russian intention presently to abandon Dalny is followed by a smart demonstration of a very different sort of policy on the part of the Japanese. Realising, doubtless, the desirableness of obtaining a foothold on this side of the Peninsula, as well as in Kinchau Bay on the west coast, they undertake with characteristic thoroughness the difficult and dangerous task of sweeping one or two of the inlets in the neighbourhood of Dalny clear of the mines with which they are known to be studded. As a commencement Kerr Bay, which lies to the north-east of Talien-wan or Dalny Bay, and has a good and sheltered anchorage, is selected for this operation.

Early in the morning of May 12th Rear-Admiral Kataoka arrives in Kerr Bay in command of the Third Squadron, consisting of the armoured cruiser *Nisshin*, the cruisers *Itsukushima* and *Miyako*, and the 2nd, 6th, 12th, 20th, and 21st torpedo-boat flotillas. The cruisers are detached with orders to make a "demonstrative bombardment" against the land batteries, while the torpedo-boats are engaged in "sweeping" the bay and taking soundings.

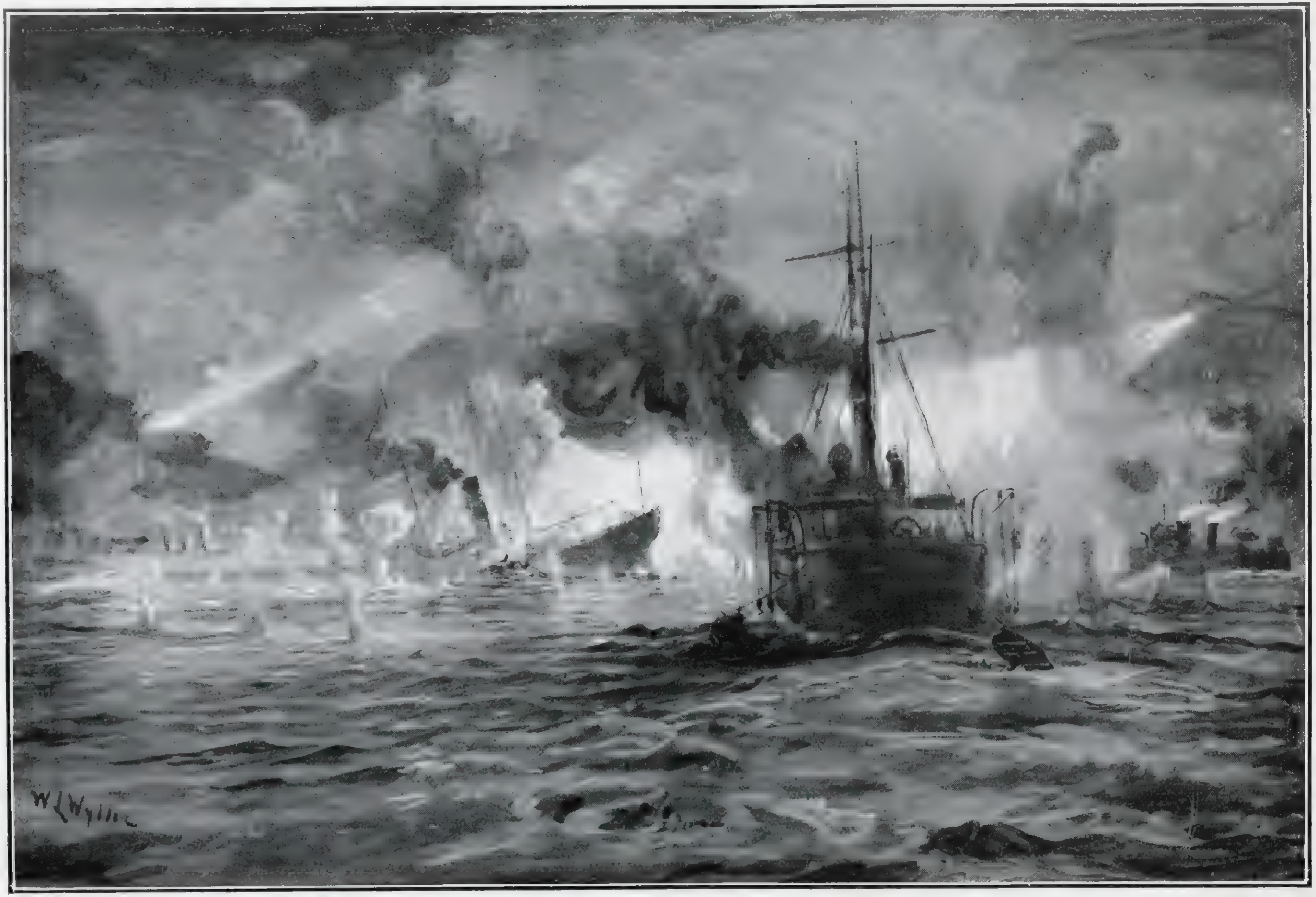
The work proceeds steadily, the cruisers finding no difficulty in silencing the land defences, doubtless owing to the withdrawal of the heavier guns to Port Arthur. The *Miyako* is fortunate in discovering a Russian guard post, held, it is estimated, by ten companies, among which the cruiser drops a few shells with dramatic results. While reconnoitring on the west shore of Kerr Bay two of the torpedo-boats discover a telegraph line, and Lieutenant Hotta lands with four bluejackets, scales the heights under the protection of the ships' guns, and destroys it. The soundings are completed by three o'clock in the afternoon, but the sweeping operations are not concluded until six, and are accompanied by a sad casualty.

Three Russian mines are discovered and successfully destroyed. But a fourth explodes prematurely under Torpedo-boat No. 48, and cuts her in two. Boats from the squadron hurry to the rescue, and seven wounded are picked up, but as many more are found to have been killed.

The blow is not a very serious one to Japan, which is particularly well supplied with torpedo-boats, and can manufacture these craft in her own yards. But Torpedo-boat No. 48 is the first warship which the Japanese have lost in the war, and the old adage that misfortunes never come singly is about to be verified in their case with painful distinctness.

On May 14th the sea-sweeping operation was resumed under cover of Admiral Kataoka's cruisers. Some resistance was offered by the Russians, who had constructed a temporary battery on the promontory between Kerr Bay and Talien-wan, bringing six field guns into action with which to harass the Japanese torpedo-boats. The squadron shelled the earthworks protecting this battery, but the gunners stubbornly maintained their position, and must have caused the torpedo-boats no little annoyance. These, however, defying the constant fire, toiled on steadily, and discovered and destroyed five mines. The work for the day had been suspended when the *Miyako* struck a mine which had not been detected. It blew up under her port quarter, and in twenty-two minutes she sank, two sailors being killed and six wounded.

The *Miyako*, although classed as a cruiser, was not much more than a des-



THE SECOND ATTEMPT TO BLOCK PORT ARTHUR.

patch-boat, being a small vessel of 1,800 tons, with a speed of twenty knots. She had a peace complement of about 220 men, and it is a striking instance of the varying deadliness of mines, that of this considerable crew only two should have been killed, while the loss of Torpedo-boat No. 48 should have occasioned three times as many fatalities. The difference is to be attributed to the part of the vessel under which the mine exploded. Between the two minutes in which—to take another example—the *Petropavlovsk* — whose sinking was accelerated by other explosions — went down, and the twenty-two minutes which the *Miyako* took to settle into her grave, there is an interval which may mean the saving of many scores of men who would otherwise be drowned between decks, or scalded to death by escaping steam.

It is typical of the dogged persistence of the Japanese character that, notwithstanding this second and more serious loss, the work of removing the mines from Kerr Bay should have been steadily prosecuted on the following day. Eight more mines were destroyed in spite of continued "interruptions"—to use Admiral Kataoka's own phrase—caused by the enemy's battery, to which two or three field guns had been added. "There are many more mines left," says the Admiral, "and the work of destroying them will be continued."

The streak of ill-luck which has marked the mine-clearing operations in Kerr Bay fades into insignificance when compared with the disastrous record of Sunday, May 15th. On this morning three Japanese battleships and several cruisers are manœuvring near Port Arthur, presumably with the intention of either making a bombardment, or of screening the passage of transports, or with both these objects in view. They are about ten miles southeast of the Liau-ti-shan promontory, when the magnificent battleship *Hatsuse* strikes a mechanical mine, which explodes under her stern, and damages the rudder so badly that she finds it necessary to ask one of her comrades to tow her. A vessel is about to approach for this purpose when the *Hatsuse*, drifts on to another mine, and in half an hour the great warship goes to the bottom. Three hundred officers and men are saved by the boats from the cruisers, including Admiral Nashiba and Captain Nakas, but, as the peace complement was 741, and may have been increased for war purposes, the loss of life must have been between four and five hundred at a low estimate.

Before entering into details of this disaster it may be recorded that the sinking of the *Hatsuse* is witnessed by Rear-Admiral Vitgert, commanding the Fleet at Port Arthur, who not unnaturally seeks to make the most of such an opportunity of harassing the enemy. Under his orders a flotilla of sixteen destroyers puts out swiftly to sea, and the *Novik* steams out into the passage to support them if necessary. But the Japanese are by no means dumbfoundered by the disaster which has overtaken them, terrible as it is. The cruisers meet the advancing destroyers with a heavy fire, repulsing them, and, having effected what rescues are possible from the sinking *Hatsuse*, the squadron draws off.

But the tale of Japan's misfortunes is not yet complete. On the same Sunday morning as that on which the *Hatsuse* has met her doom Admiral Togo receives from Admiral Dewa a wireless message saying:—"To-day, at 5 a.m., while returning from the work of blocking Port Arthur, I encountered a dense fog north of Shan-tung Promontory. The *Kasuga* collided with the port stern of the *Yoshino*, which was sunk. The *Kasuga's* boats saved ninety of the *Yoshino's* crew. A dense fog still continues."

The loss of a battleship and a cruiser in a single day means far more to Japan than it might mean to her adversary. For she has no means of replacing, at any rate the *Hatsuse*, by hurrying on the construction of vessels in yards of her own, and the laws of neutrality forbid her acquisition of warships in the "open market." Meanwhile, in the sunk *Hatsuse* alone, she has lost one-sixth of her fighting strength in first-class battleships, and, indeed, more than one-sixth, for the *Hatsuse* was one of the four most modern vessels in the Japanese Navy, the remaining two being of considerably inferior strength. She was built by the great Elswick firm on the Tyne, and was launched in midsummer, 1899. In general design she resembled our *Majestic*, but with improvements due to her later date, which are said to have placed her on an equality with our *Implacable* class. She had a displacement of 15,000 tons, was 400 feet long, with a beam of 70½ feet, and she could steam nineteen knots. She carried a principal armament of four 12-in. guns, fourteen 6-in., and some twenty 12-pr. and smaller pieces. With four submerged torpedo-tubes and a considerable belt of armour she was, for offence and defence, one of the most powerful battleships afloat, and her appearance will be familiar to many in this country, for she was the representative vessel of Japan at Spithead at the funeral of Queen Victoria.

Photo: Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.

JAPANESE NAVAL TYPE: A COMMANDER.

The *Yoshino* was of a very different class from the *Hatsuse*, being only a protected cruiser, that is to say, having no vertical armour but a steel deck, from 1.7 in. to 4.5 in. thick, over her "vitals." Her displacement was 4,150 tons, and her speed at her trials, in 1892, was twenty-three knots, but must have since been considerably reduced. Notwithstanding her age and comparatively light armament—her principal guns were four 6-in.—the *Yoshino* was no mean loss, apart from the fact that her peace complement was 360 officers and men, and that, therefore, she must have gone down with nearly 300 officers and men aboard. She was always a fast, handy ship, and was the leader of the celebrated "Flying Squadron" in the war with China.

It goes without saying that these severe losses in men and ships occasioned the greatest grief at Tokio, besides, it may be appreciatively added, calling forth an expression of sincere regret from the Russians, more especially at Mukden, where a handsome tribute was paid to the numerous proofs which the gallant Jap sailors had given of their courage. But in the Japanese Navy the disaster was not admitted to be one calculated to shake in any way the resolution of the nation, and stress was laid on the fact that the accidents were such as might happen to the ships of any Power, and were to be classed with the risks inseparable from naval warfare.

But, as regards the sinking of the *Hatsuse*, a good deal of feeling was aroused in quarters altogether remote from either of the belligerents. Not only in Great Britain, but also in the United States, the question was actively discussed whether the fact that the Japanese battleship was destroyed by a mine laid ten miles from land was not a matter into which, on international grounds, some enquiry should be made, and, if necessary, a firm protest lodged. It was pointed out that, while the use of mines to defend harbours or roadsteads is, of course, unquestionable, the laying of these engines beyond territorial waters is a most serious danger to others besides belligerents. There is also the terrible risk incurred by innocent merchant ships from mines which, not having been properly anchored, have floated out to sea, to be considered. Russia warmly repudiated the suggestion that any mines coming under the latter category were hers, and professed herself ready to pay any indemnity in general cases in which it could be proved that her mines had done damage to innocent ships. But the feeling of doubt and apprehension as to future catastrophes arising from the reckless use of mines in this war was not appreciably lessened by this defiant attitude. Even when the *Petropavlovsk* was sunk by a mine laid under conditions in which no exception

Photo: West & Son, Southsea.

THE *HATSUSE.*

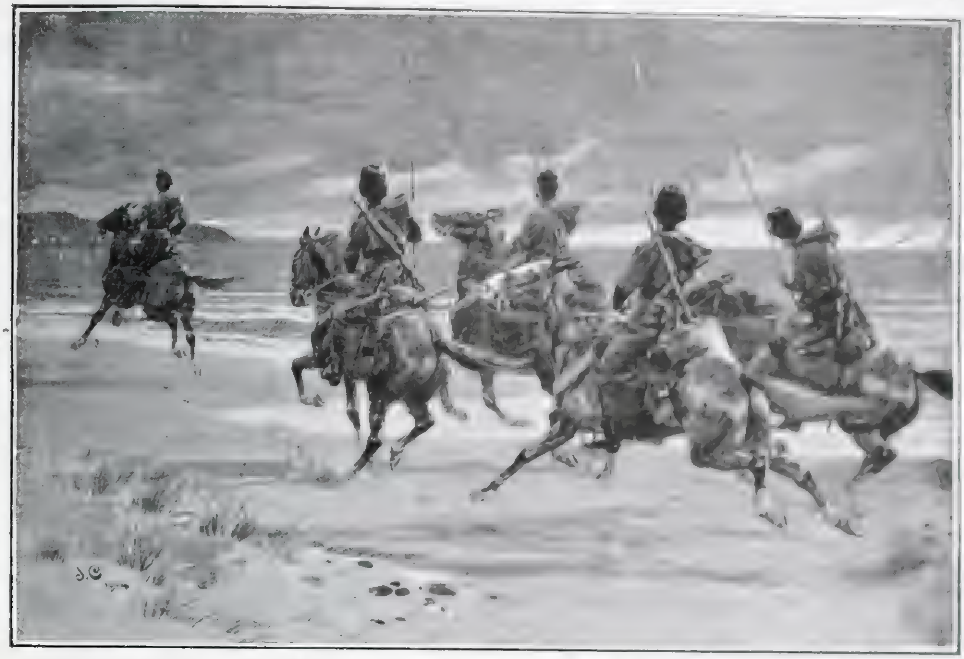
could be taken, there had been a strong feeling throughout Western Europe and America that this ghastly method of shattering a brave enemy's strength was a sort of "hitting below the belt," profoundly objectionable in the interests of civilised humanity. But, when it became clear that for many months the vessels of non-combatants crossing the Yellow Sea and the Gulf of Pe-chi-li would run fearful risks of being suddenly blown to pieces, the desire to restrict to the utmost the use of such frightfully indiscriminate engines of destruction was widely and strongly voiced. It is not possible as yet to gauge the effect of these protests, but a hope may be expressed that, out of such lamentable and appalling incidents as have been chronicled here in this connection, some good may come in the shape of an international resolve to place the use of submarine mines at any rate under stringent limitations.

The operations of the Japanese Fleet in the week commencing on this fateful Sunday, May 15th, are marked by great activity, and are, evidently, closely connected with the landings and projected landings in the Liao-tung Peninsula. After repelling the attack of the Russian destroyers which emerged from Port Arthur during the sinking of the *Hatsuse*, several Japanese gunboats and a torpedo-boat flotilla proceeded into the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, and made extensive reconnaissances, varied by occasional bombardments of the shore defences. "On the afternoon of May 17th," runs one typical despatch, "our squadron dragged for mines, and entered Kin-chau Bay, the gunboats steaming into the inner part of the bay. We fired upon the Kurily Bridge, upon a train full of troops which was passing, and upon the buildings, etc. The enemy must have suffered damage." All these repeated "demonstrations," coupled with the disembarkation of troops at various well-selected points, cannot but be a reminder to the Russians that, notwithstanding her recent losses, Japan's naval supremacy is not only still unquestioned, but capable of constant and very substantial proof.

But the main point in connection with the above-mentioned and other similar operations carried out during this period by the Japanese Fleet, is that they are no longer part of a purely naval campaign, but are chiefly connected with the commencement by Japan of her work on land. Indeed, as was remarked at the time, the loss of the *Hatsuse* itself may be regarded as due to the requirements of military strategy, since, even if a bombardment had been intended that morning, it would have been a purely demonstrative one to cover one of the landings contemplated or in progress.

During the night of May 19th several flotillas of Japanese destroyers, backed up by gunboats, make a daring reconnaissance near Port Arthur. A terrific cross-fire is kept up by the forts, and a Russian shell strikes the destroyer *Akatsuki*, killing a lieutenant and twenty-four men. The purposes of the reconnaissances are, however, effected.

At this point we may profitably break off our narrative of the Japanese naval campaign, to resume it in detail when the trend of the combined operations by sea and land shall have become more clearly apparent. Looking back, it is impossible not to be struck with the wonderful cohesion which has characterised Admiral Togo's movements, a cohesion the entire credit of which he would be the last to take to himself. At



A COSSACK PATROL AT PORT ARTHUR SIGHTING THE ENEMY'S TORPEDO BOATS.

every step there has been strong evidence of master-minds working at Tokio, and working all the more freely because they are well aware that the "pre-arranged plan"—to which Admiral Togo so constantly refers in his modest despatches—will be faithfully carried out with as little embroidery and as few deviations as possible. When one thinks of the nature of the work attempted, the gradual destruction and bottling-up of what was once a powerful fleet, the repeated bombardment of one of the strongest fortresses in existence, and, superadded to this, the protection afforded to the transport and disembarkation of troops on a really extensive scale, the first four months of war seem to bristle with lessons even for the premier Navy in the world. At the end of the first week in May it could have been said that these wonderful results had been achieved with, practically speaking, no loss at all. Even as it is, the price that, owing to a grievous accident, has been paid has not been excessive, and, whatever results may follow, a juncture has been reached of which, and of the manner in which it was reached, the Japanese Navy has a right to be frankly and always proud.

We may now usefully direct our attention to Port Arthur, which, at the date to which we have brought down our narrative of events both by land and sea, the commencement, namely, of the fourth week in May, is literally and completely in a state of siege. By sea, of course, there is no exit except, as we have seen, for destroyers—it is somewhat significant, perhaps, that on the 15th even the small cruiser *Novik* did not venture beyond the harbour entrance—since, even if the wrecks of the Japanese merchantmen have been partially cleared away, the larger vessels of the fleet are not likely to risk the Japanese counter-mines. By land, too, as explained in the preceding chapter, the barrier erected by the Second Army of Japan is now practically insuperable, except possibly by a sortie *en masse.* It is true that within the last few days General Stoessel's adjutant, accompanied by twelve Cossacks, has managed to dash through with a message from his Chief to General Kuropatkin at Liao-yang. But even such isolated enterprises will soon be difficult when the Japanese have drawn a line right across the isthmus of Kin-chau, which a single horseman will find it difficult to penetrate. At present the Russians hold Kin-chau somewhat strongly, but, as noted above, the position is assailable from the sea, and presently we shall witness a determined and successful attempt to rush it by land. Dalny is being evacuated, and it is questionable whether any sort of communication can much longer be maintained with the outside world. In a word, Port Arthur is isolated, and its siege by a resolute, resourceful, and powerful enemy has to all intents and purposes begun.

It is instructive to note Port Arthur's chances of holding out against such a close investment, followed in all probability by a vigorous assault, as that with which she is threatened. As a matter of fact, it is always rash in such cases to speak with any confidence, for there are often incidents and accidents in a siege which throw out the most careful calculations, just as happens in the ordinary battle, which, by the way, has been happily described as being in most cases nothing more than an abbreviated siege. Still, in a siege where attackers and defenders know their business, and where the siege itself has long been contemplated as almost certain to happen, there are some pretty stable factors, and these we may now discuss briefly, as far as our necessarily limited information avails us.

First, as to the garrison of Port Arthur, it appears to be generally agreed that this will number about 30,000 all told, including the troops which will eventually come in from Dalny and Kin-chau. Of these about 10,000 are sailors, who are mainly employed in connection with the fortress artillery, and between whom and the soldiers there does not seem to be the best sort of feeling existing. The latter declare bitterly that they looked to the Fleet to protect them from such a pass as that to which Port Arthur has been reduced, while the former may now, perhaps, retort that such opportunities as the Russian Army has hitherto enjoyed of proving its superiority to the Japanese land forces have not been used to conspicuous advantage. The commencement of the siege, however, should serve to diminish such unworthy bickerings, more especially as General Stoessel and Rear-Admiral Vitgert appear to be the right sort of commanders to induce soldiers and sailors to pull heartily together in such a situation as is now imminent.

To provide adequately for the defence of such a place as Port Arthur, and to leave a margin for sickness, sorties, wastage, and other contingencies, a garrison of 30,000 is by no means excessive, and, indeed, it is said that General Kuropatkin some time back offered General Stoessel reinforcements. But the latter, doubtless with an eye to the supplies, declined, saying he had sufficient men for his purpose.

As to supplies and ammunition, there

is no means of knowing at all accurately what is the extent of Port Arthur's resources; but it is confidently declared by the Russians that in both respects the garrison can hold out comfortably for nine months or a year. This is as it may be, but the fact remains that, as regards supplies, the quantity of stores available is probably subject to heavy discount by reason of the tendency of Russian officialism to the rankest form of corruption where the fighting Services are concerned. The reserve of flour is said to be ample, but there have been ugly rumours as to the quality of the immense stores of canned goods which have been accumulated in the fortress in view of an investment. In the matter of water there is likely to be no difficulty, as the ordinary supply is obtained by condensing apparatus, for which there is adequate machinery, and an immense stock of coal, upon which, it is hardly necessary to state, the Fleet does not make very heavy demands.

It has been rather fashionable to speak of Port Arthur as being "Ladysmithed," but, when it comes to a consideration of the position of the defence, the comparison set up by the loose use of such expressions is manifestly absurd. Ladysmith was a position which was of no real strength, natural or artificial, but Port Arthur, whatever may be its drawbacks, has at least been rendered by the skill of Russian engineers—of whose ability we had some experience before Sevastopol—an extraordinary example of defensive possibilities. As a protection against attack on the land side there is

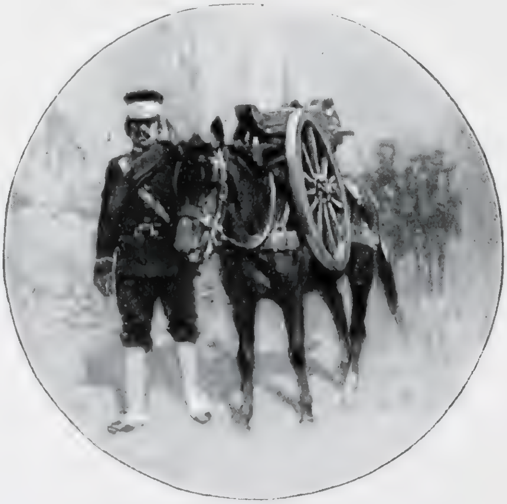
DALNY: THE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.

now said to be a triple row of forts, each position being fronted by a moat with a hedge of barbed wire beyond, and at numerous points there are bomb-proof shelters capable of withstanding the projectiles even of siege artillery. It is difficult to have any conception of the industry and ingenuity which have been thrown into this work, and which, from the early days of Port Arthur's existence as Russian leasehold property, have been backed up by expenditure of the most lavish description. But it is, perhaps, sufficient to say that modern fortification leaves little to chance, and, though it is folly to call the strongest fortress impregnable, it is equally ridiculous to ignore the wonderfully increased capacity for resistance conferred on a garrison by a system of really up-to-date scientific defences on a thoroughly coherent and harmonious plan.

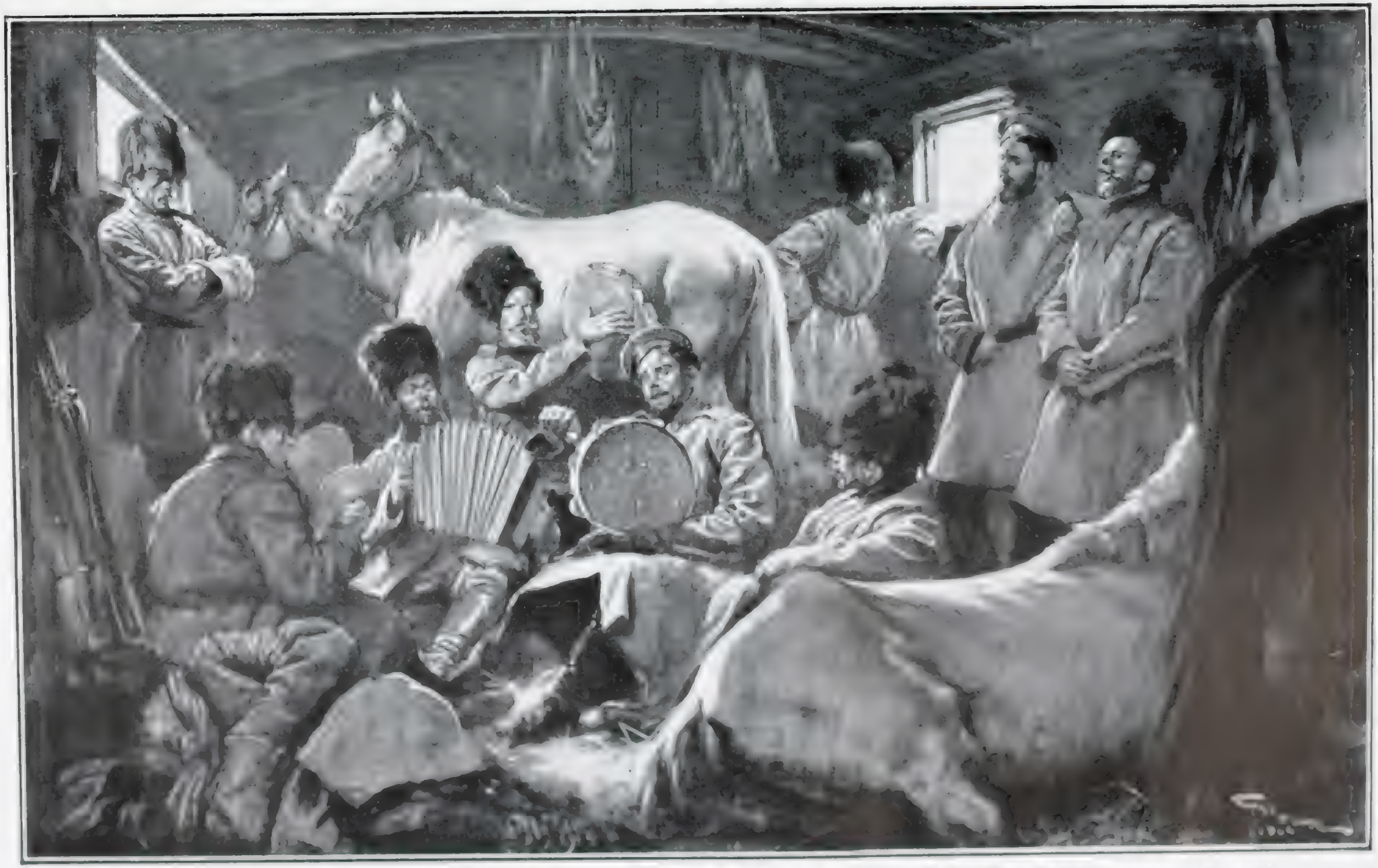
But, of course, scarp and counterscarp, parapet, bomb-proof shelter, galleries, flanking fire, and every other attribute of latter-day permanent fortification are apt to fail unless the men available are of the right sort as regards the dogged, persistent endurance which is so often the chief factor in the defence of a closely invested town or fortress. Here again the Russians have an important asset in their national character, as we found to our cost in the Crimea. The same qualities may do more than all the triumphs of military engineering to render Port Arthur something more than a hard nut to crack. For time is a consideration, and, if Port Arthur can hold out for many months, the resources of Russia may eventually render that possible which now seems absolutely hopeless.

Such considerations have a dual interest, for they not only indicate chances of a stubborn resistance, but increase the gravity of the pressure likely to be applied. Japan, as has been said, knows nearly if not everything there is to be known, even of the secrets of Port Arthur's defences.

With the keenest interest, then, and very mixed feelings, may the nations of the world look for the next development in what is now an accomplished fact, the Siege of Port Arthur by the naval and military forces of Japan.



JAPANESE METHOD OF TRANSPORTING GUNS.



SONG TO BEGUILE THE WAY. COSSACKS EN ROUTE FOR THE FRONT IN A HORSE-BOX ON THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CHUNCHUSES ONCE MORE—THE ATTITUDE OF CHINA—A DOUBTFUL NEUTRALITY—OTHER RUSSIAN EMBARRASSMENTS—INSANITARY HARBIN—OFFICIAL DIFFERENCES—THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY—WAR SCANDALS—INTERNAL TROUBLES—A DISPIRITED TSAR.

AT a very early stage of this narrative we have seen the Russians embarrassed by the presence in Manchuria of a formidable race of brigands known as Chunchuses, or "Red-beards." During the first few weeks of the War the Siberian Railway was much hampered by the sudden descents of the "Red-beards" who, it was shrewdly suspected, were at least instigated, if not actually led, by Japanese officers, and the number of troops locked up in the work of protecting the line from the attentions of these daring and hardy enemies was of itself a serious draft upon the Russian fighting line.

The Russian military authorities have latterly made important overtures to the Chunchuses, and have even, it is whispered, attempted to buy them over with subsidies of hard cash. But the "Red-beards" have an old score to settle with the holders of Manchuria. When the nations of Europe and America, in addition to China herself, and Japan, began to take somewhat seriously Russia's fluent promises to evacuate the Chinese territory she had so ostentatiously occupied, the Russians had used the Chunchuses very cleverly and unscrupulously as a reason for not clearing out of the province in question. As long as these terrible brigands threatened the very existence of a line so beneficent to the trade of the civilised world in general, the presence of Russian troops to keep them in check was surely necessary. It is suggested that, by way of emphasising this proposition, several outrages by the Chunchuses were "made to order," reprisals following as in the historic case of the massacre of the Chinese at Blagovestchensk on the Amur. Be this as it may, the animosity of the "Red-beards" against the Russians is evidently deep-seated, and all attempts to propitiate them even with Russian roubles appear to have failed.

About the middle of May there come grave reports from Harbin and Liao-yang as to the increasing trouble given by the Chunchuses, and it is regarded as highly significant that they should venture to carry on their depredations so openly, and at such a short distance from the Russian military headquarters. On May 14th a collision takes place which, although resulting in some success for the Russians, is a sharp indication of the dangerous character of the Chunchus movement. On this day news having been received that the "Red-beards" have appeared in some villages about nine miles west of Liao-yang, detachments of Russian riflemen, mounted and unmounted, are sent out against them. No Chunchuses are found in the villages where they had been reported, and the natives on being questioned give evasive replies.

As the force is leaving a village some two miles nearer to Liao-yang, it comes upon a considerable band of Chunchuses, who have evidently been concealed by the residents. The "Red-beards" boldly occupy the outskirts of the village, and are attacked by the Russian troops, who dislodge them after a heavy fusillade. The Chunchuses leave twenty dead on the field and a quantity of rifles and ammunition, and the Russians, also, have two soldiers killed and three wounded.

Another attack by Chunchuses had been made on the previous day on the coal mines at Yan-tai, which are on a branch line ten miles north of Liao-yang, and here again the brigands, although severely handled—it is said that they lost fifty killed and that seventeen were taken prisoners—fought with desperation. Among the prisoners were two Japanese officers who had been previously captured by the Russians, but had afterwards escaped. The Chunchuses are said to have admitted that they were in the pay of the Japanese, and had been supplying them with information.

It is clear that the successes of the Japanese at Kiu-lien-cheng and elsewhere greatly increase the danger to be apprehended from this source, and it is not surprising that the Russians should feel great uneasiness as to the future operations of these roving bands of desperadoes, who are excellently armed, capitally mounted, and in league, apparently, with both the natives and the enemy. But even this is hardly an excuse for a step which the Viceroy of the Far East takes about this time with the Tsar's consent, doubtless as a special counterblast to the Chunchuses' operations.

The step in question is an announcement that the convicts in the Russian penal settlements in the Far East will be given arms and be allowed to participate in the task of enabling Holy Russia to crush the Japanese. The bare suggestion of such an outrage upon civilisation is regarded with disgust by those who are well aware that the penal settlements in question contain not political prisoners, but murderers and criminals of the lowest type. To employ such abandoned ruffians in the ranks of the Tsar's regiments would be an insult to the brave Russian Army, and might lead to shocking barbarities in warfare, to the mere possibility of which an enemy so chivalrous and humane as Japan has every right to object. It is earnestly hoped by all right-thinking men that Russia will abandon a project so peculiarly at variance with the known character of her kindly ruler.

Apart from the Chunchuses, the Russian military authorities in the Far East are beginning to feel grave doubts as to the intention of China to preserve her loudly-proclaimed neutrality. At an early stage of the War the Chinese Government moved General Ma, with some 16,000 regular troops, to within easy distance of the Manchurian border, and from time to time there have been other military movements reported which, although by no means unnatural measures of precaution in the circumstances in which China finds herself, are greatly resented by the Russians. The latter recognise the danger to which their rear might be exposed if the Chinese troops became inflamed by Japanese successes, and went suddenly on the warpath against an army they have little reason to love. Accordingly Russia, through her diplomatic representatives, urges most strongly a stricter preservation of Chinese neutrality, and complains that she is waging war in a hostile country—a complaint which, taking into consideration all the circumstances of her presence in Manchuria, is, perhaps, a little thin.

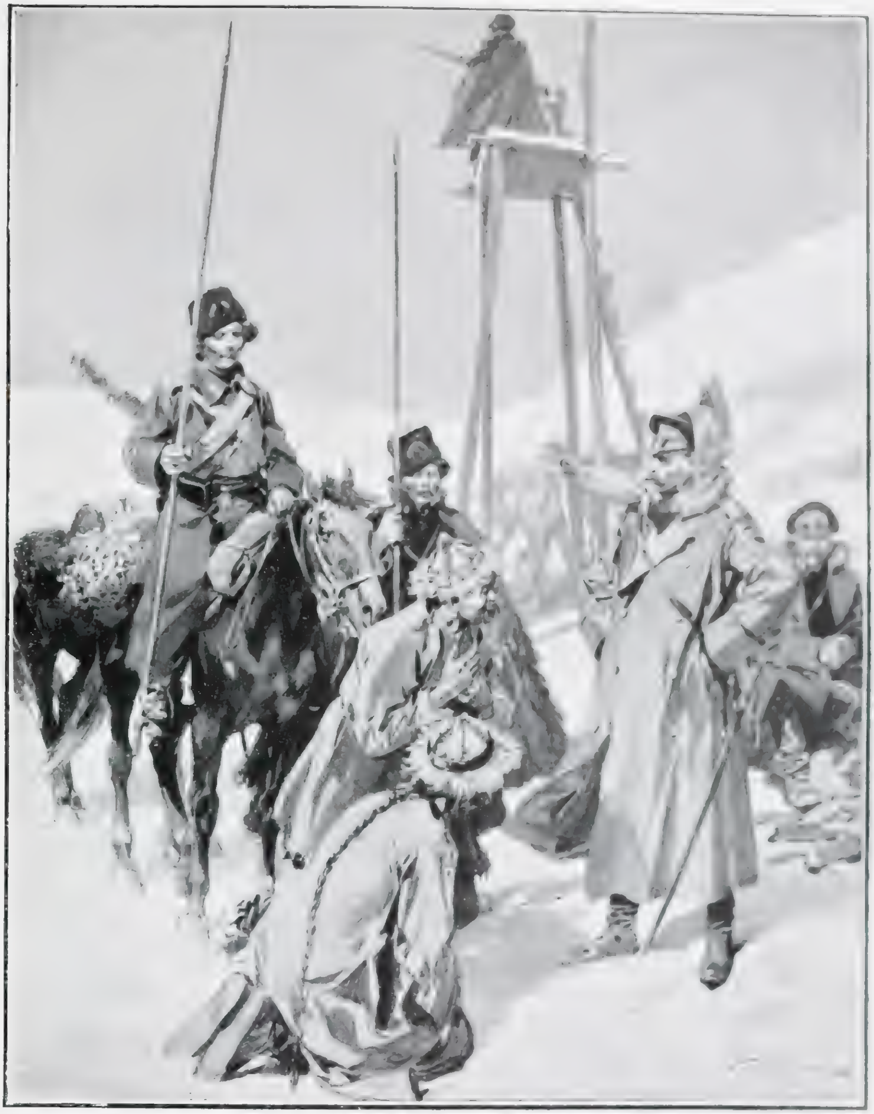
China replies by a solemn asseveration of her resolve to maintain neutrality, and Japan declares that it is her wish, too, that China should not be drawn into the conflict if only for the reason that overt Chinese hostility to Russia would enable the latter to draw supplies from Chinese territory which she is now precluded from doing by Chinese neutrality. But all the declarations in the world cannot get rid of several elementary facts. One of these is the presence of considerable bodies of well-drilled and disciplined Chinese troops in positions from which they could conceivably cause the Russian Army a good deal of trouble. The admitted fact that there are a number of Japanese officers in the Chinese Army is also not without significance. Lastly, there is always the trouble that in China a rebellion may occur, like that of the Boxers, which the Imperial Government is quite powerless to control, and which might spread with alarming rapidity were the secret societies to circulate an order that the present opportunity of taking the Russians at a disadvantage was not to be neglected. All this affords serious food for thought at a juncture when collisions between the Russians and Japanese on land are becoming frequent, and any indication of the boasted and assumed superiority of the Russian soldier is rather conspicuous, so far, by its absence.

But infinitely more serious to the onlookers is the terribly grave contingency which may be attached to Chinese interference in this momentous quarrel. It is not absolutely certain that the French would regard such interference as compelling them to take an active part in co-operating with Russia—a step which would be followed as a matter of course by our fulfilment of the terms of our alliance with Japan; but the situation is clearly one of the greatest delicacy and danger, and its existence cannot be disregarded in any faithful narrative of the War.

Associated with, and yet distinct from, the attitude of China as a gigantic, if unwieldy, whole, is the question of the growing unfriendliness with which the Russians are being regarded by the Chinese with whom they come into contact at such places as Mukden, Liaoyang, and Harbin. At Harbin especially the behaviour of the Chinese inhabitants is becoming independent to the point of insolence, and the authorities find it difficult to prevent individual Russian officers and soldiers from chastising Chinamen by whose effrontery they have been exasperated.

Particularly is trouble experienced in the matter of supplies. The Chinese at Harbin have, as usual, the market almost entirely in their hands, more particularly as regards vegetables. During the early part of the War they gave little trouble, but latterly have become, as most Orientals do in such circumstances, very defiant and extortionate in their prices, which they utterly decline to abate. It is difficult to exaggerate the genuine seriousness of such an attitude as this in such a country as Manchuria, in which the question of supplies is constantly becoming acute. The trouble is, moreover, accentuated in this case by the deep-seated grievances of the Chinese against the Russians, who but a few months ago were treating them often with the greatest cruelty and injustice.

Russia has many other difficulties to contend with. The magnitude of her resources is unquestioned, the ability of her generals undoubted, the patriotism of her troops obvious. But deep within the



CHUNCHUS SUSPECTS BROUGHT BEFORE A RUSSIAN OFFICER

Russian official system lies the canker of corruption, and at every point this, coupled with amazing unreadiness and an utterly indefinite plan of operations, is beginning to be evident. Natural obstacles under such conditions assume still graver proportions, and difficulties arising from personal shortcomings are increased tenfold.

Among the troubles which beset the Russians at this period is the state of Harbin, the great junction at which the Siberian Railway is split up into two lines running to Port Arthur and Vladivostok respectively. Owing to the failure of the authorities to pave the streets, to organise a corps of scavengers, or even to make drains, this important centre is becoming a vast insanitary quagmire, and pestilence in the horrible forms of cholera and typhus seems inevitable. At times the state of the streets is such that the inhabitants are blockaded in their houses for two or three days, and the spring sun is now causing disease to germinate in a manner which occasions the gravest anxiety among the medical officials concerned. When the strategical significance of Harbin is considered, when it is remembered that hither are being brought all the wounded from the south, and that through Harbin almost every Russian soldier who goes to the front must pass, it will be understood what a serious matter this is, and what good reason General Kuropatkin has for his vigorous denunciation of commanding officers who leave their camps at Harbin in a state which cannot but lead to the ravages of a worse enemy than gunpowder or steel.

Another trouble is the unfortunate state of strained relations between Admiral Alexeieff and General Kuropatkin—a deplorable condition of affairs in an army with which all is going well, but simply appalling in one which has already been subjected to serious reverses, and is being hotly pressed by a resolute and powerful enemy. It is said that Kuropatkin has complained in strong terms to the Tsar of the interference of the Viceroy with his plans, an interference which has been largely responsible for the defeat at Kiu-lien-cheng. The Tsar, there is reason to believe, has the greater confidence in the Commander-in-Chief, but there is a very strong Court faction in favour of Alexeieff, whose power may possibly have increased since the possibility of a combined opposition to him on the part of Kuropatkin and Makaroff has been removed by the latter's tragic fate.

The Siberian Railway continues running, but the actual transport of troops during April and May does not seem to be as large as might have been expected from the grandiloquent declarations of the Russians as to the number of troops they would put into the field in June or July. The railway is now being actively supervised by the Minister of Ways and Communications, Prince Khilkoff, and this energetic official is making strenuous endeavours to improve the rate at which military trains can be sent through to Harbin. But, up to the time of the thaw on Lake Baikal, the number has not exceeded six daily, and, even when this comes to be increased, the fact that huge quantities of stores as well as of men have to be despatched from Russia, greatly reduces the colossal figures in which Russian dreams as to overwhelming reinforcements are clothed.

The business of guarding the line alone is a heavy drain upon Russian resources. The task is, as has already been explained, entrusted to a separate corps of Frontier Guards, which is composed of fifty-five sotnias of mounted men, and fifty-five companies of infantry, with six batteries of artillery, numbering some 25,000 all told.

It may be computed that by the fourth week in May Russia has in round numbers rather over 250,000, and under 300,000 men in the Far East. But not more than 150,000 are available for the purposes of a field army, and of these probably Kuropatkin has not more than 80,000 under his immediate control at Liao-yang.

Still, none the less, the fact that the

Siberian Railway is still running, and that progress is being made with the circum-Baikal section, by which the passage across the Lake will be avoided, must be taken into careful consideration, and due regard had to the steady accumulation of men and stores which, on arrival at Harbin, can be sent off to the south or east as occasion may require. The possibilities of transport by the Sungari River, which flows past Harbin and later joins the Amur, must also not be overlooked in the gloomy process of estimating the effect of the embarrassments with which Russia has to struggle at this period of the War.

In Russia itself there is a good deal to impede the smooth conduct of affairs at the front. There are enormous numbers of men which can be drawn upon, and the military organisation on paper is very complete and impressive. But mobilisation does not appear to proceed by any means as quickly as it should considering the gravity of the situation. As for the preparation of naval reinforcements, it is still doubtful at the end of May whether anything practical can be done in this direction, owing to the difficulties of coaling a squadron *en route*. Meanwhile, the Russian Navy has sustained a severe blow in an extraordinary mishap to the new battleship *Orel*, which has been stranded near Kronstadt in shallow water, owing to strange neglect, or, as is otherwise hinted, deliberate outrage in regard to the sea-plugs, which are found to have been left open. Another battleship, also in course of construction, the *Borodino*, meets with a minor accident which, however, necessitates careful and rather tedious repair.

As far back as the middle of March a painful case of treachery was discovered at headquarters, a cavalry captain attached to the Chief Commissariat Department having been detected in a correspondence with some Japanese officers staying at Vienna with reference to the sale of a secret plan of mobilisation. The offender was promptly arrested, tried, and executed, and there is no reason to suppose that other leakages have occurred. But the incident deserves mention as indicating one of many dangers to which a European army is liable at the hands of trusted officials who, through wild extravagance or otherwise, have been reduced to desperate forgetfulness of all that is due to honour and patriotism.

An almost equally painful scandal is caused by the abominable malversation of funds collected through the agency of the Red Cross and other philanthropic organisations which have arisen since the outbreak of the War. It is openly stated that many members of the aristocracy, Court ladies, and officers of the Guards, have been employed at high salaries in the administration of these funds, and the most unprincipled misappropriations have taken place. Eagerly as the Tsarina has thrown herself into the gracious work of assisting the despatch to the front of comforts for the gallant troops, the taint of these odious rumours is not easily dispelled, and many large subscribers stipulate strictly that the expenditure of their money shall be under proper control.

But far graver in reality than the gravest of individual scandals is the practical certainty that the continued failure of the Russian Army to vindicate its existence is helping to bring about a terrible state of unrest throughout Russia generally. Terrible stories are told of reigns of terror, of wholesale executions, of secret burials behind inviolable cordons of soldiers. Regiments which in the ordinary course would have gone to the front are being, it is said, retained at home to overawe the civil population, only the reservists being sent to fight the Japanese. It is possible that there is some exaggeration; on the other hand, where the police are so powerful much may be screened which actually happens.

But in any case, where there is so much smoke there is sure to be some fire, and there is little doubt but that the internal condition of Russia towards the end of May is certainly not that of a country which is united in its determination to overcome all obstacles, and wipe out the memory of all reverses, by showing the right kind of sentiment at home as well as the right kind of valour in the fighting line.

A sad figure in this gloomy picture is that of the Tsar. A vacillating autocrat at best, he has displayed the obstinacy which so often goes with weakness; has allowed himself to be hopelessly misled by unscrupulous counsellors; and is now in a slough of confusion and mistrust from which self-extrication seems well-nigh impossible. Holy Russia has had rulers of various extreme kinds—extremely strong, extremely proud, and extremely vicious—but seldom has one of them afforded such a painful spectacle of nervous incapacity as that which is now constantly and publicly presented by the unfortunate Nicholas II. The irony of the spectacle deepens as we realise in what a brief interval the dreamer of dreams of Universal Peace has developed into the helpless agent in the prosecution of a particularly devastating and far-reaching war.